Space, Power, and Locality: the Contemporary Use of *Territorio* in Latin American Geography

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Abstract

This article explores the concepts involved in the term *territorio*, the nature of its uses and the interpretations given to it by different user groups in Latin America. In so doing, the authors find that despite its ubiquitous nature, polysemic use and its hybrid conceptual construction, territorio is a specific Latin American concept that can shed light on power relationships in space, triggered by the confrontation between global forces on the one hand and local, place-based, or "territorially anchored" groups on the other. The article unfolds across two sections. The first summarizes diverse conceptualizations of space, power, and locality, which are understood to be core elements of territorio, particularly when these are linked through actions, demands, or claims of a collective. The second section approaches the thematic contexts in which territorio and its associated concepts are used: as spatial entities of jurisdictional administration, appropriation by indigenous, afro and peasant communities, political demands and social movements, control-dispossession and reconstruction, spatial entities of assets, and place-based development. We argue that an understanding of the multiple uses and interpretations of territory in Latin America does not just reveal the uniquely nuanced ways of thinking about geography in the region, but it also raises questions over the possibility of a multiple construction of key geographical concepts.
Palabras claves: *territorio, territorialidad, desarrollo territorial, América Latina*

Resumen

Este artículo explora los conceptos envueltos en el término *territorio*, la naturaleza de los usos del mismo y las interpretaciones dadas por distintos grupos de usuarios del

término en América Latina. Sostenemos que, a pesar de su naturaleza ubicua, su uso polisémico y la hibridez de su construcción conceptual, territorio es un término específico latinoamericano, que puede contribuir al análisis de las relaciones de poder en el espacio, activadas por la confrontación entre fuerzas globales, por un lado, y grupos con "anclaje territorial", por el otro. El artículo presenta dos secciones. En la primera se explican diversas aproximaciones a los conceptos de espacio, poder y localidad, que son elementos centrales para el entendimiento de territorio, particularmente cuando éstos están conectados a través de acciones, demandas o reclamos de un colectivo. La segunda sección aborda los contextos temáticos en los cuales territorio y sus conceptos relacionados son usados: como entidades espaciales de administración jurisdiccional, apropiación por grupos indígenas, afros y campesinos, demandas políticas y movimientos sociales, control-desposesión y reconstrucción, como unidades espaciales de recursos y desarrollo basado-en el lugar (o desarrollo territorial). Creemos que el entendimiento de los múltiples usos e interpretaciones de "territorio" en América Latina no sólo revela los distintivos matices del pensamiento geográfico en la región, sino también, plantea cuestiones sobre la posibilidad de una construcción múltiple de conceptos geográficos fundamentales.

Keywords: *territory, territoriality, territorial development, Latin America*

Introduction

The concept of territory has been explored extensively in geography. Its classical definition stems from the geopolitical thought of Ratzel (1897), who associated the term *Territorium* to the relationship between state, control, and the production of borders.[1] In modern Anglophone political geography and political economy, territory has become central to discussions on the modern territorial nation-state within the context of globalization, world-system research, nationalism, the social construction of a region, the significance of borders, and international relations (Taylor 1994, Agnew 2005, Sassen 2006, Paasi 1996, Ó Tuathail 1996). Political geographers have criticized conventional definitions of territory that emphasize boundedness, identity, integrity, sovereignty, and spatial coherence (Painter 2010). Nevertheless, as Elden (2013:6) states, "territory has been neglected as a topic of examination." In fact, in Anglophone geography, territory has been much less theorized than other key concepts such as space, place, landscape, region, and scale; terms that have undergone considerably academic scrutiny since the 1980s (Painter 2010). French geography on the other hand, has attributed major importance to *territoire,* not only in relation to political structures and spatial relations between citizens and the state (Gottmann 1952, Claval 1974, Lacoste 1993), but also within human appropriation of space (Raffestin[1980]1990), and space as seen through a cultural lens (Bonnemaison 1981).

Translated into Spanish and Portuguese as *territorio/território,* the current application of the concept in Latin American geography[2] and other social sciences has come to represent diverse and even contested bodies of meaning, beyond its spatial constructs of state, power, sovereignty and frontiers. Many of them have been explored in critical research on spatial processes related to power, authority, and identity of local (or place-based) social actors involved in confronting global, national (or non-place-based) forces

through collective action. In these cases, territorio is an "arena of dispute" (Manzanal 2008, Svampa 2008), where struggles of spatial control take place through processes of negotiation and contestation. In the same vein, derivations of territorio, such as territoriality (*territorialidad*), stand out as constructs to describe spatial practices of control and appropriation, including the outcomes of territorial de-rootedness, disarticulation, or de-anchorization (*desterritorialización*) (Ianni 1998) and processes of territorial re-appropriation (*re-territorialización*) (Haesbaert 2004). Consequently, territorio is also central to research on the spatial dimension of social movements (Porto-Gonçalves 2001, Fernandes 2005, Svampa 2008, Escobar 2008).

In another context, territorio is the spatial reference of interventions aimed at place-based development, which in Latin America has been translated and interpreted as *desarrollo territorial*. The term was coined in the framework of a wave of neoliberalism and decentralization policies of the 1990s, promoted by actors operating in regional development agencies (Bervejillo 1995, Boisier 1998). Desarrollo territorial was further developed through economic institutionalism and neo-developmental approaches (e.g. Schejtman y Berdegué 2004). In this context, territorio has been understood as bound space, within which, its own endogenous forces (e.g. institutions, groups, markets) are capable of driving change. Nonetheless, the classic notion of territorio as a state or jurisdictional, spatial entity is still widely used.

In summary, multiple actors operating in diverse organizational locations (e.g. scholars, activists) in Latin America invoke territorio and its derivations both as a descriptive and analytical concept. A growing number of research centers and universities offer programs in territorial studies (*estudios territoriales*) and in territorial planning and management (*planificación- ordenamiento- gestión- territorial*). Finally, territorio is key to the political discourse of agencies operating in less formal and informal institutional spaces, such as those that social movements, peasant and indigenous organizations, state officers, politicians and planners open up and occupy.

In this article, we explore the underlying substance of territorio in light of its conceptual foundations and social implications. We identify the nature of its uses and applications and the interpretations given to it by different user groups. We maintain that despite both its ubiquitous nature, polysemic use and its hybrid conceptual construction, territorio is a highly specific, if fluid construct in Latin America. It is concern with power relationships in space, particular those triggered by the confrontation between global forces on the one hand and local, place-based or "territorially anchored" groups on the other. We appeal to two arguments in establishing this thesis. First, we posit that space, power and locality are fundamental elements for understanding territorio, particularly when these are connected through actions, demands, or claims of a collective. Secondly, we argue that such actors in Latin America are actively involved in intense debates over these concepts, which over time has led to highly fluid constructs that place into question the original conceptual boundaries of these constructs.

We draw on evidence found in academic publications of scholars and social activists working in Latin America as well as other regions as a foundation for this thesis. These materials were selected based on our situated knowledge and ten year of experience as academics working in a higher education rural territorial development program. In the

first section, we discuss the three fundamental concepts that we utilize for identifying the contemporary uses of territorio: space, power, and locality, which come together through some form of collectiveness. We argue that territorio is constructed through multiple, competing interpretations of these concepts. In the second section, we explore the activity of user groups in specific contexts as a means of illustrating the multiple uses of territorio and of its derivations. We argue that in general, key notions of appropriation, control, and spatial entities for place-based development differentiate those uses.

Analytical Concepts found in Territorio

The diverse definitions of territorio are discussed in several academic disciplines such as geography, political sciences, cultural anthropology, sociology, and economy diversely define and utilize territorio in making sense of the social. Fundamental to the classic definition of territory are the concepts of space and power. Nevertheless, locality appears common through out the innovative uses in present-day Latin America. Here, we find elements of place (*el lugar*), the local (*lo local*), and the endogenous (*lo endógeno*). In this section, we illustrate how concepts and authors that have worked on these three elements are being incorporated in definitions or interpretations of territorio.

Space

Elden (2013) presents two dominant definitions of territory. While one regards territory as bound space, or a container under the control of a group of people (usually the state), the second considers it an outcome of territoriality, a human strategy of appropriation. When referring to space as an element of territorio, these two assertions can be traced. One often cited reference to space in definitions of territorio, is that of Lefebvre (1991 [1974]), who states that the geographical space is fundamentally social. This space comprises social relations and is not only seen as a physical space, it is also the product of social lives. Space is not given; it is a constitutive element of society. The historical constitution of space occurs from the interaction of three elements: a) the social practices, resulting in a perceived space of everyday day social life and common perceptions; b) the representations of space, or conceived space, which is produced by professionals, such as scientists or planners and c) the representational or lived space of imagination. In relation to this space-as-product notion, and particularly with the arguments behind Lefebvre's first and third space, an additional often cited author in explanations on territorio is Claude Raffestin. In *Pour une géographie du pouvoir* ([1980]1990),[3] Raffestin maintained that space constitutes a milestone that is needed to understand territory. As per this view, space is the product of relationships among people who are acting on it as first reality; yet, this "geographical space" is the previous term to territory that becomes such through symbolic or instrumental actions for appropriation and valorization. Through these actions, space becomes situated or "territorialize". In this sense, Mazurek (2006) refers to space as a system of localizations, and he explains territorio as a system of actors, arguing that only lived space, where appropriation occurs, is a territorio. Montañez and Delgado (1998), Giménez (2001), and Sosa Velásquez (2012) make similar determinations.

Following the space-as-product approach, the Brazilian geographer Milton Santos

argued from a structuralist perspective that what matters is the *espaço geográfico*. This refers to the interaction between a "local society" and "external forces" (Santos [1971] 2008:71), built on the result of historical and social relations that are manifested through organized social processes and functions. According to this understanding, social relations are systems - insolvable, solidary and contradictory - that link objects, actions (Santos 1996: 51), and norms (Silveira 2011). Understanding territorio in relation to space, Santos (1994) argued that what matters in social analysis is an explanation of the "use" of a territorio by non-state actors, and he coined the term *território usado* (Santos and Silveira 2002*)* as synonymous for *espaço geográfico*.

In addition, many authors working outside the field of geography employ the view of territorio as space-as-container. These people emphasize territorio as a social construction, which often reduces the geographical or spatial basis of territorio to the provision of resources or the receptor of social relations. When viewed as space-as-container, the main or only relation of territorio is localization (Mardones Barrera 2016). This view is also implicit, when authors refer to diverse dimensions of territorio. For example, in the economic dimension, territorio is a stock of interrelated assets (Linck 2006, Berdegué *et. al* 2015). Martínez Valle (2012) defines territorio as a dimension between the individual and national productive systems, created through cooperation and geographical anchorage of its particular resources. Further, rural sociologists tend to describe a social dimension of territorio, for example, through Bourdieu's concept of the field, determined by actor strategies of conflict and cooperation, according to their access to capital, particularly social capital (Lucero Gatica 2006, Martínez Valle 2013).

Besides the diverse epistemological approaches to space found in the interpretations of territorio, statements around this term, particularly in popular scientific publications or activist manuscripts, are often taken from material that originally aimed to theorize space or place. This often contains elements of David Harvey's geographical Marxist theory. He was one of the first geographers who maintained that space was not given and absolute, nor a container of none-spatial things. Instead, he viewed place as a unique conjunction to building environments, cultures and peoples that distinguished one locality from another (Harvey [1990]2004). In the relation between space and place, Harvey uses the term territory (and territorial), but he specifically refers to a relation of territorial configurations, to the logics of spatiality of capitalism, or to the "fixed territorial logic of political power," for example, involved in the management of people through state apparatus (Harvey in Schouten 2008:1). His arguments on space and place are often used to explain territorio. Further examples are the notion of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2004) as a capitalist strategy of reproduction, and the theory of uneven geographical development (Smith 1991, Harvey 2005), which are often used to explain the causes of territorial dispossession, territorial unevenness and the diversity of constructed territorialities that are the result of capitalist expansion (Di Cione 2007). Through this territorial interpretation of Harvey's statements, Marxist geographical theory provides ground for spatial and place-based assertions of territorio, in the context of the expansion of capitalism and the resulting material transformations across the planet.

Power

The notion of power is deeply embedded in both control and appropriation. Recognizing this, de Souza (1995:78) defines territory as space that is delineated by, and originating from, power relations. This broad understanding of the relation between power and space recognizes the multi-dimensionality of power beyond state authority (Schneider and Peyré Tartaruga 2006). One approach in territorio takes a Foucauldian view, in which power is not wielded by people or groups, or through episodic or sovereign acts of domination or coercion, but instead, power is dispersed, pervasive and everywhere (Foucault 1978). According to Foucault, the main question related to power is how it operates and produces reality, especially since power is embodied in discourse, knowledge and regimes of truth (Foucault 1976). This view of power supports political discourses of resistance, autonomy and self-determination, which have been fertile ground for demands to territorio (Mardones Barrera 2016). Through discourses of ethno-territorial or socio-territorial social movements, power is exerted (Fernandes 2005, Escobar 2015). These movements demand their territory, arguing that groups who live in and off their immediate space have the legitimate power to appropriate and control it (Zibechi 2005, Porto-Gonçalves 2009). More recently, following Foucault's analysis of the relations between power and body, feminists and queer movements are using the notion of body as territory (*cuerpo como territorio*). This supports the claim that the body is a lived territory in which conflicts are expressed subjectively; these territorios are in constant dispute with dominant hegemonies such as patriarchy and white supremacy, and become a site of resistance (Rivera 2010).

A second broad used approach to power in territorio, can be analyzed in de Souza's (1995, 2013) definition. He makes use of Hanna Arendt's (1969) ideas of power as a function of human relations that acknowledges authority. Arendt neglected to demonstrate that power is based on sovereignty, force or violence; she saw it merely as the human ability to act in concert with, to persuade, or to coerce others. For Arendt, authority is a specific source of power, vested with authoritativeness in persons by means of their position, knowledge, and information. However, she argued that one's authority depends on the willingness of others to grant it respect and legitimacy, rather than on personal abilities to persuade or coerce. De Souza (2013), using the same arguments, emphasizes the collective character of power exertion in territorio, an idea found in definitions and contexts of use that define it as a social construct (Escolar 1993; Herner 2009; Martínez Valle 2012). Hence, a constitute element of territorio is some form of authority that represents a level of agreement. For instance, Berdegué *et al.* (2015:3) define territorio as, "a space with a socially constructed identity, over which some form of authority is exercised."

Locality

Acknowledging debates about locality in Anglophone geography (e.g. Malpas' 1999), the notion of locality we present here relates exclusively to conceptual elements of territorio. We view it as an outcome of different notions of place, local and endogenous. Place has emerged as a key concept within the spatial turn of Anglophone geography (Cresswell 1996). It refers to distinctive and bound forms of space, defined and constructed by the lived experiences of people (Hubbard and Kitchin [2004] 2011). In

territorio, an understanding of place can be identified, although key place-thinkers are rarely cited in discussions about territory.[4] In humanistic geography, place and sense of place express a sense of belonging for those who live in it, providing locus to identity (Seamon [2006]2015). Here, experiential properties of space underline the meanings of place as experiences, embodiment or lived environments (Tuan 1977, Buttimer 1993). These meanings are created by people and are lived in their daily existence. Place often implies location of immediate actions and identities of local people (Oakes 1997) and is the space of experiences and cohabitations (Schneider and Peyré Tartaruga 2006). As place acknowledges diverse scales of experience, including those that are individual and intimate, it differs from the collective fundament of territorio: the experiential assertion of social groups to space through collectivity and appropriation. Giménez (2001) for example, views territorio as the space of events and traditions across history, as the land where ancestors lived and where sacred rituals take place through cultural and symbolic appropriation. This emphasis on the collective and the experiential, lived meanings of place found in territorio, are evident in the uses of both terms by Escobar (2008). He refers to indigenous and afro-Colombian movements as place-based social movements (*movimientos sociales basados-en-el lugar*), who live and experience place, but who claim recognition of their collective rights to territorio, as a means to survive as a group.

The approach to place found in the ideas of Massey (1984) offers ways to discuss territorio from an economic and institutionalist perspective. Places are complex entities, situated within and shaped beyond their own notional boundaries. Their specificity is constructed from diverse social relations that together weave a particular locus (Massey 1984). Places as (social, political, or economic) intersections reflect the power geometry (Massey 1994) that operates across diverse spatial scales and arrangements, at either institutional or individual levels. For Massey (1991) a sense of place can be outward-looking and progressive, and the local can contribute to understanding space and time. Similar ideas are found in definitions of territorio that consider it to be a scale or space of mediation between local and global rationalities (Haesbaert 2013). This mediation is expressed at different spatial scales, and takes place through actions by institutions (Schejtman y Berdegué 2004, Martínez Valle 2012). Similarly, Juárez Alonso (2013) approaches territorio as the area where people live and relate with their environment and with external social powers, emphasizing the conviviality embedded in those relations.

The local is related to the term locale, as an element of place, or the setting in which social relations are constituted (Agnew 1987). In structuration theory, (Giddens 1984, 1985) locales denominate a physical scale, from a parcel up to the territory of a nation state, and are characterized by unequal power relations between and among its actors and structures (Dyck and Kears 2008 [2012]). Social relations within the locale are expressed in places, which are "internally not uncontradictory," given that they are constructed by the "juxtaposition, the intersection, the articulation, of multiple social relations" (Massey 1994: 137). The locale is related to localization. For Ranaboldo (2006), the locale has a double sense of proximity: geographical --understood in terms of location-- and social, in terms of organizations or institutions. Remmers (1996:4) views localization as the strengthening of local capacity to take advantage of global opportunities, by "transforming and adapting to local conditions." In close connection with the local, the notion "endogenous" emerges

in territorio (de Mattos 1999). This notion is often used when territorio is seen as a spatial entity that offers possibilities of place-based development (Vázquez Barquero 2002). Endogenous is regarded as something that is born from within (Van der Ploeg and Long 1994) and involves the potential to advocate social change (González Díaz *et al.* 2013). It involves agency and empowerment of local communities (and especially women) to take control of their own place-based development process (Boisier 1998, Méndez 2002, Cortínez 2016). Locality implies a close relation with three aspects of place proposed by Agnew (1987): locale, location, and sense of place. However, the diverse social, political or economic uses of territorio encompass another distinctive element: collectivity. This translates into common actions, collective forms of appropriation, and endogenous development. Locality, in territorio, evokes the social and spatial endogenous capacities of place and of place-based actors as collectives in relation to the global. As such, territorio reflects power relations in both space and locality.

The diverse epistemological approaches to space, power, and locality found in the definitions and uses of the territorio sustain our view that this is a hybrid construction. This hybridity has offered opportunity for particular socio-academic communities to create specific approaches to the situated power-space relationships in Latin American context. Different epistemologies often intertwine within definitions of territorio, which are re-defined according to the needs of who uses them. An example of this hybridity and its potential constitutes the definition of territorio of Orlando Fals Borda, one of the most important Colombian and Latin American intellectuals and founder of participatory action research. In this book, *Acción y espacio: autonomías en la nueva República* (2000), he begins his understanding of territorio by defining space. First, he adopts the Lefebvrian notion of space as a product. He considers space to exist beyond static and ahistorical, physical dimensions and sees space as flexible and changeable according to historical impulses of anthropic action and social construction. Fals Borda presents a humanistic view of space as lived experiences (*sensaciones vivenciales*) and temporary sensations resulting in concrete, but transitory, entities of spatial occupation. The space-as-container approach completes this definition of territorio. He calls these entities social recipients or containers, which contrary to physical recipients, are malleable and adjustable. The political-administrative references of these adjustable containers are the territorios. With this understanding of territorio, as a container of lived experiences, Fals Borda became the most important Colombian reference for a socially oriented spatial planning process that acknowledges the needs, views and fears of people in relation to the territorio they inhabit. The hybrid nature of the concept territorio, also interpreted as its multi-dimensionality provides ample opportunities for inter-disciplinarity in the academic sphere (Giménez 2001, Llanos Hernández 2007, Sosa Velásquez 2012, Llambí 2012, Martínez Valle 2013).

The Uses of Territorio in Latin America

Territorio has been a popular term in Latin America since the late 1980s, following social, economic and political change induced by globalization, particularly in what today is called the Global South (Escobar 2015). There are two historic reasons. First, when demands for land by indigenous and peasant movements in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia were addressed (to some extent) through the land reforms of the

1960s-1980s, social movements began to call for territorio, in an attempt to expand claim for autonomy and self-determination. Secondly, in context of neoliberal policies since the 1990s, territorio and territorial development (desarrollo territorial) became widespread terms linked to decentralization (Finot 2002, Bosier 2004), to local development (*desarrollo local*) (Albuquerque 2007), and to neo-developmental approaches in rural areas (Sepúlveda *et al.* 2003, Manzanal *et al.* 2006). In this context, territorio considers material assets found in a locality, but also cultural-symbolic identity of its inhabitants and their institutions. Here, territorio is viewed as a spatially bounded entity. The use of the term territorio, which moves between being a spatial-political claim of social movements and being a spatial entity in place-based development scenarios, explains why it is seen as a polysemous concept (Bozzano 2000, Favareto *et al.* 2015). Yet, the term is flexible, and anchored in the idea that power is exerted through collective practices in multiple interpretations of locality.

Spatial entities of jurisdictional administration

The use of territorio as a space, controlled by a normative-legal authority, is according to Haesbaert (2013) one of the interpretation of the political dimensions of territorio. The political-administrative entities within a national territory are frequently referred to as territorios (provinces, departments, municipalities, etc.). For instance, *ordenamiento territorial* is conceived as a rational, technical, and normative process, expressed in a public policy, guiding spatial planning by the state, and materialized within territorios (Massiris 2000). Since the first decade of the 21st Century, particularly in the post-neoliberal, so-called progressive governments of Latin America (such as in Bolivia and Ecuador), fierce debates have been taking place about the legitimacy of absolute control over these territorial entities, especially in relation to a wave of neo-extractivism (Gudynas 2009, Acosta 2011). Neo-extractivist practices are contentious because they are based on intensive resource extraction, entailing a series of profound social and ecological impacts on the territorios, through the creation of frontiers and enclosures, concessions of land to foreign investors, and destruction of nature. Gudynas (2009) refers to this as raw material-based development, where the state is the only agent of development, promoting equalitarian re-investment of primary commodity export revenues. This state-centered development strategy requires the complete regulation, appropriation, and export of natural resources, guided by an imaginary unified national interest (Burchardt and Dietz 2014).

Appropriation of territorio by indigenous, afro and peasant communities

Territorio is also used in a context of symbolic-cultural definition, as the subjective appropriation or valorization of a lived space by a group (Haesbaert 2004). In this context, the Lefebvrian notion of the representational or lived space and the humanist tradition of place as subjectively defined, both correspond to the spatial fundament of territorio. Here, territoriality is constructed between people and nature through actions, perceptions, forms of territorial valuation and attitudes (Raffestin [1980]1993). A cultural and spatial construct, territoriality functions through complementary and reciprocal relationships of kinship, production and religion, and can likewise elicit confrontation (Nates Cruz

2011:211). In this context, territorio secures the reproduction of social groups and the satisfaction of their material or symbolic needs (Giménez 1999:27). This understanding of territorio is fundamental to the struggle for rights to land of indigenous peoples and Afro Latin Americans. Since the 1990s, the International Law on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, or ILO Convention 169 of 1989, recognizes the rights of both indigenous land and territory, the latter described as, "the total environment of the areas which the peoples concerned occupy or otherwise use" (ILO 2013:35). Despite the implementation of land titling programs and important changes in legal frameworks and the recognition of plurinational states in the constitutions of Ecuador and Bolivia, indigenous and afro peoples' demands for territoriality, autonomy, and self-determination continue to be source of major political disputes (Chávez 2008, CINEP 2012). These disputes become territorial as economic interests and state policies (e.g. strategic national projects for mineral extraction, jurisdictional sub-governments, protected areas) are carried out in indigenous territories (Cisneros and McBreen 2010, García Serrano 2014), neglecting ancestral, cultural, and symbolic practices of material appropriation (García Hierro and Surrallés 2005). While the territorial turn (Offen 2003) of the 1990s focused on collective indigenous land titling, Svampa (2012:22) refers to the "eco-territorial" turn since the 2010, which focuses on indigenous communitarian views, territoriality, and environmental discourses.

The use of territorio in debates over the survival of the peasantry and family farming (Schejtman 1980, Bendini and Steimbreger 2011) implies a subjective valorization of space, in which labor and agricultural production are related. Recognition of rights to land and water have been at the core of peasant demands since the second half of the past century. Until the 1980s, land reforms were central to the agrarian question (de Janvry 1981) and access to land was considered strategic to improving peasant conditions. After the failure of sectoral approaches to rural development during the 1990s, the territorial question arose (Bebbinton *et al.* 2008:2875), encompassing the idea that diverse, place-based assets found in rural territorios can be converted into opportunities to enable peasant viability. For peasant movements, this viability constitutes an alternative to global agribusiness (Cáceres *et al.* 2010, Fernandes 2012) that reinforces agro-ecological production, producer-consumer relations, and food sovereignty (Altieri and Toledo 2011, Rosset and Martínez Torres 2016).

Considering that agriculture is diminishing in rural livelihoods, in another interpretation of territorio, relations between space and peasant forms of production are about access to other territorial assets beyond land and water. This view acknowledges the interconnection between diverse rural livelihoods and peasant organizations embedded in multi-scalar contexts (Llambí 2012). It considers elements of the "new rurality," or *nueva ruralidad* (Grammont 2004), where links between peasant households, organizations and institutions exist beyond the locality and are strongly dependent on connections to urban areas and other extra-local markets (Gómez 2001). This view asserts that resources for rural development can therefore be found outside the peasant location. Territorio can take on the multi-locational character of modern peasant livelihoods, with strong social cohesion based on community, organizational and family institutions (Sumpsi 2007). Communitarian relations and cooperation play a key role for development (Martínez

Valle 2012). For rural people, territorio can be a network that includes places where they produce, sell and live, or to which they migrate for work (Grammont 2004).

Political demands and social movements

The political use of territorio through the abovementioned indigenous, afro, and peasant interpretations over the past three decades has been central to the discourse of social movements (Escobar 2008) and analysis of place-based development and change (Bebbington *et al.* 2008) as well as to the analysis of activism as an alternative to classic development (Fernandes 2005, Escobar 2015). For indigenous groups, territorio implies three fundamental demands: a) the autonomous use, enjoyment and management of the natural resources within it; b) control over the political, economic, social and cultural processes taking place inside it; and c) acknowledgement of indigenous norms and institutions exerted in it (Zúniga Navarro 1998). Territorio has been immersed in the armed protest of the Zapatist movement in Mexico, of the landless peasant movements in Brazil, indigenous national movements in Ecuador and Bolivia, or afro-groups in Colombia (Offen 2003, Escobar 2015, Fernandes 2005). Now territorio is involved in social demands for water or forest rights or for autonomous implementation of global environmental programs such as REDD+; territorial claims are part of the social resistance against natural resource extraction, mining or oil projects or mega hydropower infrastructure (Bebbington 2007, Gudynas 2009, Svampa 2010).

This politized use of territorio has been fundamental to the academic analysis of social movements in Latin America. From a post-development viewpoint, Escobar (2008) recognizes "emancipatory possibilities" in the responses and practices of indigenous and other social movements in Latin America, as viable alternatives to western-dominated development discourse and practice. As pointed out above, a major element in the narrative of these place-based social movements is the necessity of territorio, associated to a broader understanding of nature, where the live projects of communities take place (Escobar 2001). It is for this reason that Fernandes (2005) refers to socio-territorial movements, pointing at their specific intentionality of social relations over space. Escobar (2008) refers to ethno-territorial movements, who make an ontological claim for territorio and are deeply concerned about the conservation of what he calls "organic nature" (Escobar 1999). Zibechi (2003: 186) similarly emphasizes demands for territory as claiming rights to "the physical space gained or conquered through long struggles."

Control, dispossession, and reconstruction

A major point of discussion in the analysis of space-power relations is the question of how, who and in which context power is wielded, which hints at the idea of territoriality (Elden 2010). Territoriality is not considered a behavioral phenomenon, but rather a geo-political or an eco-political strategy (Sack 1986) or a form of spatial appropriation (Raffestin [1980] 1993). According to Sack, territoriality is an attempt to control objects, people and relations by defining control over a "geographic area", which he calls territory. Raffestin on the other hand acknowledges the existence of multiple powers in territorio and understands human territoriality in strictly relational terms, as the "ensemble of mediated relationships" that link individuals and/or social groups with

exteriority and otherness (Klauser 2011:1). Through actions in space, appropriation and mediation define territoriality. These two ideas of control and appropriation associated to territorialidad are present in the analysis of the spatiality of territorial dispossession, and the concepts of desterritorialización and reterritorialización are increasingly used to explain both the loss of territorial control and the rise of new forms of territoriality. As found in Deleuze and Guattari (2002), de-territorialization refers to loosening, decontextualizing, and unraveling, while re-territorialization as its necessary pair involves reassembling, recontextualizing, and re-creation (Barnes and Minca 2012:15).

Desterritorialización is often used in a context of loss of control over territorio that results from power conflicts. It also refers to "the abandonment or negation of traditional appropriation practices" (Montañez and Delgado 1998:123) such as communitarian forms of organization, which leads to territorial precariousness or disintegration (Martínez Valle 2013). Processes of de-peasantization or proletarianization (e.g. Llaguno *et al.* 2014, Giraldo 2015), as well as the transformation from symbolic and material spatial practices based on culture and ethnicity, to practices based on homogenous consumption are explained by Houghton (2008) in the context of desterritorialización. In one example from a physical perspective, de-territorialization took place through the displacement of peasant and indigenous groups during the armed conflict in Colombia (e.g. Restrepo and Rojas 2004) or, in other examples from around the continent, through evictions to make place for major large-scale mining, oil extraction or infrastructure (Gudynas 2009, González and Melo 2015). In the referenced literature, desterritorialización is approached as the conclusive outcome of a social, spatial and symbolic de-contextualization resulting from globalization, while responses originating from actors' agency and endogenous capacities are excluded from the analysis.

Haesbaert (2004) criticizes this approach and first develops his thesis on multi-territoriality. In his later contributions, Haesbaert (2013:13) argues "de-territorialization can never be dissociated from re-terriorialization." In his view, the re-contextualization or reconstruction of innovative, individual practices of territorial control follow or complement a de-territorialization process. This allows actors to re-create new territories. Haesbert (2013:34-35) proposes the concept of multi-territoriality, as the possibility of having simultaneous and/or successive experiences in different territorios, that results in a permanent reconstruction of one's own territorios. This thesis resulted from the observation of how southern Brazilian migrants moving to North Brazil and, later, to neighboring countries, adapted spatial practices of the territories they moved to with those of their own and also influenced space as they permanently reconstructed territories (*reconstrução do territórios*). Multi-locational or transnational networks (e.g. *territorios en red,* or *redes transterritoriales*) are innovative territorial constructions, allowing for the persistence of place-based, symbolic practices in foreign locations (Mato 2006). In this geographical perspective, desterritorialización and reterritorialización processes coexist and are not exclusively related to a detachment of the physical (locational). They continuously produce symbolic and subjective practices of spatial appropriation in new territories. Examples of this context of use are found in Giménez (2001), Cielo and Antequera Durán (2012).

Spatial entity of assets and place-based development

Haesbaert (2004) proposes an economic definition of territorio as the spatial source of productive forces (especially capital and labor) that result from class struggles. This view is strongly interwoven with new economic geography, institutionalist economy and neo-development approaches, all of which have strongly influenced place-based development interventions in Latin America.

As mentioned before, in the context of a wave of neoliberal policies from the 1990s onwards, territorio became important at least in two ways. First, as part of structural adjustment programs that aimed to reduce state intervention throughout the continent, administrative, political and economic competences were transferred from the state to subnational bodies whose spatial circumscriptions were the territorios (Bervejillo 1995). Regional development agencies, such as the CEPAL-ILPES[5] and the Interamerican Development Bank, in collaboration with multilateral institutions such as the World Bank or other United Nations agencies also favored regional development programs, and territorios turn into spatial entities for interventions. Regional development changed to the notion of territorial development in frame of decentralization (Boisier 2004) and territorios became the spatial entities where decentralization was operationalized (*territorios de la descentralización*) (Manzanal 2008:19). At the same time, territories gained greater economic and social significance as placed-based, endogenous development strategies were designed (Vázquez Barquero 2002). In later approaches, territorial development programs emphasized the importance of cooperation and institutions of place-based groups (Abramovay 2006, Favareto *et al.* 2015). Common to all these views, is the recognition that territorio cannot be understood outside of globalization (Bervejillo 1995) but that in fact, globalization, and non-territorial resources, constitute an opportunity for territorial development.

For example, from a new economic geographical perspective emphasizes how corporations take advantage of territorial conditions to get connected to global markets. Small and medium enterprises as well as territorial industrial districts or clusters, are fundamental in this thinking about territorial development (Méndez 2002, Albuquerque 2007, Fernández-Satto and Vigil Greco 2007, Figueroa Sterquel *et al.* 2016). In addition, from a neo-institutionalist perspective, territorios are bound entities with a socio-territorial identity and important territorial resources, which enable institutional change. This neo-development perspective of territorio is found in approaches referred to as *desarrollo con enfoque territorial* or territorially tailored development (Berdegué *et al.* 2015:1).[6] Proponents of this view, including Berdegué *et al.* (2015:2), state: "Territory is a space with a socially constructed identity (Schejtman and Berdegué 2004) over which some form of authority is exercised (Agnew, 2005)." This is a historical argument, referring to the social construction of identity as an outcome of a diversity of factors (e.g. natural, political-administrative, economic, ethnic, etc.). Nevertheless, the social identity shared by people in a territory is not homogenous; territorios have various dimensions. This definition, in the words of Berdegué *et al.* (2015:2), "resonates with Storper's (1997) idea of territory as a stock of relational assets." As argued by de Souza (2013) and discussed above, territorios require authorities and institutions to achieve development. Contrary to the other uses, this economic-institutional view of territorio has an instrumental and

practical character (Schneider and Peyré Tartaruga 2006) that promotes place-based or territorial development interventions. This 'territorial' approach to development gained popularity and has replaced the regional approach in the early 2000s. According to Berdegué *et al.* (2015) this happened because in Latin America, a 'region' refers to larger areas, where a similar identity is often difficult to define; territorios denote smaller spatial entities. In addition, Abramovay (2006) acknowledges that the term territory is taken from the theoretical roots of this conception of development, found in European debates and particularly in Italian economy. Latin American scholars and agencies continued to use the term as such in their approach to place-base development.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this article, we have explored the diverse uses of territorio in Latin American social science. Our analysis leads us to argue that territorio is a specific Latin American term that can help to reveal power relations in space, triggered by disputes or negotiations between global and local forces, and expressed through actions of "territorially anchored" groups. Two arguments support this thesis.

First, space, power and locality are the three main elements of a common understanding of territorio. In the opening section, we discussed these elements and provided evidence to state that the concept has become a conceptual hybrid, as applied in Latin America. Although a common understanding of space in the conceptualizations of territorio acknowledges a Lefebvrian perspective on space as-product, certain definitions regard territory as an object or 'container of society' (e.g. as a jurisdictional entity), or as a 'container of assets'. In this highly economic and instrumental view, state organizations or other groups of actors take advantage of the resources found in a territorio to construct or counter globalization or to strive for endogenous development. Under a Foucauldian interpretation of power, territorio becomes a discursive 'arena of disputes' for a diversity of power claims over space, which effectively enable a power over subjects or a power to project interests and agenda. According to this perspective, appropriation and control result from the creative relations that emerge between space and power. This understanding is fundamental to a Marxist explanation of spatial and environmental injustice in Latin America, as well as to post-development interpretations that are part of the discourse of socio- and ethno-territorial movements. In addition, the neo-development, economic narrative of territorio, emphasizes the potential of actors in territorios to competitively generate change, thereby opening up unique pathways to progress through innovative forms of social organization and cooperation.

Hence, locality becomes the third, most innovative element in the conceptual construction of territorio in Latin America. Particular to territorio is the notion that both endogenous and joint decisions are viable, and that these are composed of the multiple agencies of a collectivized social identity. Territorio, similar to humanist or structuralist view of place, refers to the lived space of experiences, appropriated through practice. Territorios are seen as complex spatial entities shaped by both place-based and external elements, where a diversity of social arrangements interplays with power relations, generating what Massey (1994) would call a 'power geometry', where notions of locale, locality and location become fundamental. Finally, locality embraces endogeneity, or

the capacity of groups and organizations to act with some degree of autonomy, there by define unique developmental patterns of continuity and change. The current use of territorio in Latin America not only reflects power relations in space, but also in locality.

The second argument to support our thesis is related to the intense academic debates (mostly in Spanish and Portuguese) that exist around a robust and highly interchangeable use of territorio and local space in Latin America. This debate is mostly a result of the multiplicity of interpretations of the concept of territorio and views of proponents of two main interpretations in particular. On the one hand, those who resist globalization through the use of a political–ontological interpretation of territorio, dismiss the development approach of territorial development as a highly simplified, instrumental construct (Fernandes 2005). On the other hand, those who view territorio as an agentic resource vis-à-vis the forces of globalization render territorio to a highly discursive, if critical and politized concept (Bozzano 2000), thereby neglecting what they regard as more overriding, core concerns, such as economic livelihood and production (Bebbington 2000).

But beyond the scholar discussions, territorio has provided the possibility to express feelings, understanding, struggles for what groups claim to be collective demands and to discover endogenous possibilities for change. Although not reflected in international academic journals, in their daily practice academic and non-academic audiences alike freely invoke territory as as *reinvindicaciones territoriales*, *disputas por el territorio*, *governanza territorial*, *territorios de vida, vida territorial, territorios inteligentes, territorios hidrosociales, inteligencia territorial*, *gestion del territorio, derechos territoriales*. This exchange occurs in a diversity of public encounters and in media, including policy papers, academic literature, civil society statements, and think tank analysis, both offline and online. In addition, territorio has become part of the technical vocabulary of development consultants , NGO staff, government officials and policy makers, and planners. Despite its polysemic and ubiquitous nature, territorio not only has become a conceptual platform for the exchange of critical ideas about space, power, state and civil society encounters, but it also has become the site of collective action for place-based development. Among scholars, territorio opens the up possibilities for interdisciplinary analysis of local space, identity, and endogenous change.

In practice, territorio has become a highly fluid analytical term, which as a result is subject to multiple utilizations. As noted earlier, its politicized connotation associated to resistance, struggle, and protest might be interpreted as discursive and somewhat idealistic. Scholars might find that a more rigorous treatment of the concept is called for. We have shown, however, that Latin American scholars are concerned about the uses of the term territorio and that other academic-activist communities have acknowledged and interpreted territorio both in academia and activism, incorporating dissenting voices in the process of its analysis

We believe that presenting territory as used in Latin America to an audience interested in geography will draw attention to not only different ways of thinking about key geographical terms such as space and place (Hubbard and Kitchin [2004] 2011). It also will help to raise questions over *which* other geographical terms are important and *where* these might benefit from a systematic de-construction. Debating territorio also contributes to critical discussions about knowledge production, and in particular, it can

question the politics of language and narrative during knowledge production. Finally, translation, understanding the utilization of language, and greater awareness of how different actor networks organize in regions think about space, can contribute to a more nuanced, critical geography.

Acknowledgements

Notes

[1] Territorium has been used in association with the concepts of Herrschaft (authority) and Grenzziehung (delimitation of borders), to refer to spatial entities under authority of feudal lords, prior to nation-states (Jureit 2012:36-38).

[2] Although territorio is used in Spanish as well as other Romance languages, we are emphasizing in the use given to it particularly in Latin America, where its context of use are rather diverse and multiple.

[3] Claude Raffestin, the Swiss geographer with French origins, wrote *Pour une Géographie du Pouvoir*, in 1980. This book was translated into Portuguese in Brazil in 1993, *Por uma Geografia do Poder*, and became a key reference for further theorization of the concepts territorio, territorialización, and their derivatives by Brazilian geographers.

[4] Notions of the theorization about place under diverse approaches can be identified in the arguments about territorio. However, Anglophone authors that have discussed place or territory are not often cited in these arguments, due to the lack of translations of the seminal works by these scholars (e.g. Buttimer, Tuan, Thrift, Agnew, Elden).

[5] CEPAL (created in 1948) is the Comision Económica para América Latina, the regional commission of the UN, created to support economic development in the region. ILPES, Instituto Latinoamericano y del Caribe de Planificación Económica y Social, second to CEPAL, is a capacity building support institution for planning and public management in Latin America and created in the 1960s.

[6] RIMISP is a regional network of partner centers and researchers (www.rimisp.org/dtr). Based on study cases and regional comparisons, the group developed desarrollo territorial rural (DTR) as a conceptual framework to understand 'territorial' differences in development, focusing on economic growth, poverty reduction, and improved distribution of income. Several underlying principles of the approach were derived from European and Canadian experiences, as well as theoretical perspectives. Key for DTR is the understanding of territorio as the spatial context of actors and institutions, capable to profit through territorial and extra-territorial assets to change. The framework assesses factors that lead to better 'performance' of the territorios, as mean to influence public policy. The group has produced extended literature; fundaments of this approach are found in Schejtman and

Berdegué 2004; or the special issue of the journal World Development (2015, vol.73).

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