

Rethinking Territory

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Abstract

Territory is the quintessential state space and appears to be of growing political importance. It is also a key concept in geography, but it has not been subject to as much critical attention as related geographical terms and remains under-theorised. Taking my cue from Timothy Mitchell's suggestion that the state should be understood as the effect of social practices, I argue that the phenomenon that we call territory is not an irreducible foundation of state power, let alone the expression of a biological imperative. Instead, territory too must be interpreted principally as an effect. This "territory-effect" can best be understood as the outcome of networked socio-technical practices. Thus far from refuting or falsifying network theories of spatiality, the current resurgence of territory can be seen as itself a product of relational networks. Drawing on an empirical case study of the monitoring of regional economic performance through the measurement of Gross Value Added (GVA), I show that "territory" and "network" are not, as is often assumed, incommensurable and rival principles of spatial organisation, but are intimately connected.

Keywords

state spatiality; territory; territory-effect; network; region; value added

Introduction

Territory is back. For long something of a poor relation among spatial concepts, and until recently on the wane politically, territory today seems to be ever more important. Borders, security, sovereignty, secession, invasion and occupation – all usually seen as close correlates of territory – are rarely out of the news. Meanwhile, in political theory and philosophy, the fashionable notion of deterritorialisation cannot be separated from a correlative reterritorialisation. Territory's time has come, or so it seems.

If any kind of space is quintessentially "state space", it is surely "territory". Yet, for all the far-reaching discussion of the territorial reorganisation of the contemporary state, the decline and rise of the political salience of territory, and the implications of territory for the exercise of power, the nature of territory itself – its being and becoming, rather than its consequences and effects – remains under-theorised and too often taken for granted. The intense engagement with diverse forms of social theory that has marked human geography since the 1980s has involved a comprehensive interrogation and re-thinking of many of the core concepts of the discipline, including space, place, landscape, region and scale. Until recently, however, the concept of territory has not received the same level of attention, at least in the Anglophone literature.

It is interesting to think about the reasons for this relative neglect. It seems plausible to suggest that among critical human geographers the concept of territory may even have been seen as something of an embarrassment. There is a couple of possible explanations for this, particularly if we accept for the sake of argument that territory has usually been understood as a *bounded* and in some respects *homogeneous* portion of geographical space. Geographical thinking in the 1980s and 1990s came increasingly to emphasise the porosity and fluidity of boundaries, and the supposedly consequent reduction in their political salience. It also stressed the

increasingly (or even intrinsically) heterogeneous character of space and place. In these circumstances, invoking the concept of territory risked being seen as either anachronistic (because the world had changed) or reactionary (because an insistence on seeing the world in terms of bounded and homogenous spaces suggested a fear of Otherness and an exclusionary attitude to social and cultural difference).

The concept of territory may also have been embarrassing for some because of its ill-defined, but powerful associations with the use of similar concepts in animal ethology and socio-biology. After all, one of the commonest uses of the term “territory” in general discourse is to refer to the home range of a animal, particularly with reference to aggressive and defensive behaviours. Of course, anything that risks smuggling socio-biological assumptions into studies of human activity is anathema to most critical social scientists. A similar mistrust of ideas smacking of environmental determinism may have added to the suspicion with which the concept of territory has sometimes been regarded. Although many discussions of territory suggest that it is fundamentally a political phenomenon, the perception that it also often involves fixed borders perhaps raised the spectre of “natural boundaries” and nineteenth century understandings about the relationship between culture and environment: desert peoples, mountain peoples, forest peoples and plains peoples; each with a special ineffable bond between culture, nature and “territory”.

The resurgence of territory

The relative neglect of the concept of territory within geography has begun to change. It is not hard to find reasons for this. Claims that the world was becoming borderless were always overstated, but in the years since 9/11 borders have become much more important and more visible. At Heathrow Airport’s new Terminal 5

huge signs over passport control announce “UK Border”. Disputes over territory and sovereignty are also fiercer as ever. In the summer of 2008 the conflict between Russia and Georgia over the disputed regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia erupted into lethal violence. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian land continues. The war in Iraq has brought the issue of sovereignty to the fore. In such circumstances the abolition of border controls at many international frontiers inside the European Union looks more like an exercise in European exceptionalism than the harbinger of the cosmopolitan world to which the EU’s supporters might once have aspired. And anyway, territorial politics is evident in many places inside the EU in Catalonia, Ireland, Belgium and elsewhere.

The recent revival in the apparent political significance of territory poses obvious challenges to the “borderless world” thesis of writers such as Kenichi Ohmae (1990) and to claims that we are seeing “the end of sovereignty” (Camilleri and Falk, 1992), though it is worth noting that writers on socio-spatial theory have often provided more nuanced accounts. For example, a reduction in the powers of nation-states does not necessarily mean the end of territory, as the extensive literature on the restructuring and rescaling of state power and political authority amply demonstrated (eg Brenner, 2004, Brenner et al., 2003, Jones and MacLeod, 1999, Swyngedouw, 2004). In a rather different vein, the “new economic geography” (which, as Ron Martin (1999) shows, took rather different forms in the two disciplines of economics and geography) argued for the continuing – or even increased – salience of place, locality and region in promoting economic development, innovation and “competitiveness”.

The resurgence of territory also appears to call into question the current popularity of network approaches to socio-spatial theory – from Manuel Castells’ diagnosis of the emergence of the network society based on spaces of flows (Castells, 1996), to

geography's recent emphasis on relational thinking (eg Massey, 2004) and its lively engagements with the actor-network theory (eg Bingham and Thrift, 1999). Doubts about networks are certainly widespread outside academia, where the assumption that human beings are innately and immutably territorial is widely held. Defensive nationalisms are presented as "natural" and predictable expressions of ethnic difference. A government minister in a supposedly centre-left administration endorses gated communities (*The Guardian*, 2004). Journalists are quick to diagnose regions as suffering from "Balkanisation", with all that term's connotations of an irredeemably tribal human nature lurking beneath a thin covering of civilisation. Respected voices in the European Union, a supposed bastion of tolerance and cosmopolitanism, argue against the admission of Turkey because of its unbridgeable Otherness (*The Independent*, 2002). More progressively, a territorial view of the world arguably valorises minority languages and cultures, distinctive gastronomies and artistic and musical practices, and a nurturing and ecologically-sensitive approach to the land and its products.

Networks, on the other hand, have become widely linked to risk and danger in the public imagination. IT networks transmit computer viruses and child pornography and enable financial fraud on a grand scale. Airlines spread diseases such as SARS and swine flu, transport illegal immigrants, and help to destroy the environment through climate change. Terrorists, people traffickers and drug smugglers are organised in networks. So too (and almost as threatening to middle America and middle England) are eco-warriors and anti-capitalist activists. Global financial networks have resulted in such a complex web of interconnections that a credit crisis in one jurisdiction is rapidly transmitted to many others leading to the failure and state bailout of major financial institutions. Despite much evidence for the nomadic origins of the human species, nomadism today is frequently seen as unnatural and

nomadic people from European Roma to Aboriginal Australians and the San people of the Kalahari suffer discrimination, oppression, mistrust and dispossession.

These sketches of the popular politics of territories and networks are over-simplified, of course. Opposing views and voices that take a more positive view of networks and offer a more sceptical approach to territory are present in all kinds of public and private discourse, including in popular journalism and the speeches of populist politicians. Nevertheless, the general tendency today is, I think, to affirm a territorial view of the world as an expression of human nature and (therefore) right, while seeing in networks a source of anxiety, instability, risk and unwelcome change.

Whatever their rights and wrongs, the implicit assumption of almost all these discourses – academic, public and popular – is that territory and network are incommensurable and competing forms of spatial organisation, and that territory-thinking and network-thinking are mutually incompatible. In this paper I aim to show that this assumption is mistaken and that territory can best be understood as the effect of networked relations. The central argument is as follows. The phenomenon that we call territory is not an irreducible foundation of state power, let alone the expression of a biological imperative. It is not a transhistorical feature of human affairs and should not be invoked as an explanatory principle that itself needs no explanation: territory is not some kind of spatio-political first cause. Instead, territory must be interpreted principally as an *effect*: as *explanandum* more than *explanans*. Adapting Bruno Latour, like other enduring and seemingly solid features of our world this effect can best be understood as the outcome of networked socio-technical practices. Moreover, far from refuting or falsifying network theories of spatiality, the contemporary resurgence of territory can be seen as itself a product of relational networks. Thus “territory” and “network” are not, as is often assumed, incommensurable and rival principles of spatial organisation, but are intimately

connected. However, these connections need to be identified quite precisely. It is important, not to invoke a generalised “reciprocity”, “interaction” or “dialectic” between territory and network that leaves the taken-for-granted notion of territory intact and simply adds networks on. If we take the networked constitution of the territory-effect seriously, then conventional ideas of territory will need to be reconceptualised. This in turn might enable us to think somewhat differently about the significance and consequences of territory – about the effects of the effect, as it were. For example, from this viewpoint territory is necessarily porous, historical, mutable, uneven and perishable. It is a laborious work in progress, prone to failure and permeated by tension and contradiction. Territory is never complete, but always becoming. It is also a promise the state cannot fulfil.

Territory and state spatiality

The concept of territory has been intimately associated with the spatiality of the state for at least five hundred years. In political theory, many influential definitions of the state have invoked territory as an essential element. Max Weber’s is perhaps the best known:

[The state] possesses an administrative and legal order subject to change by legislation, to which the organized activities of the administrative staff, which are also controlled by regulations, are oriented. This system of order claims binding authority, not only over the members of the state, the citizens, most of whom have obtained membership by birth, but also to a very large extent *over all action taking place in the area of its jurisdiction. It is thus a compulsory organization with a territorial basis.* Furthermore, today, the use of force is regarded as legitimate only so far as it is either permitted by the state or prescribed by it. [...] The claim of the modern state to monopolize the use of

force is as essential to it as its character of compulsory jurisdiction and of continuous operation. (Weber, 1968: 56, emphasis added)

For Michael Mann it is the centralised territoriality of the state that explains state power (Mann, 1984). For Antony Giddens modern states are distinguished from their predecessors by their association with sharply bounded territories across which they exercise power uniformly (Giddens, 1985). The modern doctrine of state sovereignty in international law is predicated on the concept of territory. Similarly the term “jurisdiction” can refer *both* to the exercise of legal authority *and* to the territory over which such power extends. In English, the word “country” can be used as a synonym for both “state” and “territory”.

The notion of territory at work in these formulations involves a number of assumptions. Territories are in principle demarcated by clear boundaries rather than amorphous frontiers. Territories do not overlap. The spatial extent of state sovereignty is coterminous with territory. State power is exercised uniformly across territory, and the boundary marks a radical rupture in the nature and intensity of power. Such assumptions underpin many of the official doctrines of international relations as they have been generally understood by state elites and frequently enshrined in international law. These include “rights” to self-determination, territorial integrity, and non-interference (cf. Elden, 2005b); the distinction between foreign and domestic policy (cf. Campbell, 1992); control over terrestrial and marine resources; and authority over individuals and populations present within state boundaries.

While government leaders and international jurists may insist that these conventions and doctrines are absolute, they are of course contested politically and frequently violated in practice. They also involve significant conceptual difficulties. John

Agnew coined the phrase “territorial trap” (Agnew, 1994) to highlight the mistaken assumption that the spatialities of state power and state territory are homomorphic. In addition, processes of state restructuring from the 1970s onwards generated more complex forms of territorial organisation. James Anderson (1996) suggested that in the European Union, neo-medieval and postmodern forms of territoriality were emerging involving overlapping authority and shared sovereignty. Examples of partition, devolution and federalisation appeared to testify to the plastic nature of state spatiality.

This growing awareness of the plasticity of state spatiality is related to the emergence of relational approaches to theorising the state more generally. Many authors have questioned whether the state should be seen as a distinct entity or a unified social actor at all (for a review see Painter, 2005). In a notable critique of the relentless reification of the state in mainstream social science, Timothy Mitchell argues that the state is not an organisation or structure separate from the rest of society, but must be understood as a structural effect, that is “it should be examined not as an actual structure, but as the powerful, metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist” (Mitchell, 1991: 94). Mitchell’s arguments form an important part of the inspiration for this paper. The suggestion that the state is best conceptualised as the effect of practices can equally be applied to state spatiality and specifically to territory. Indeed Mitchell himself makes the point that territorial boundaries can be understood in exactly this way:

One characteristic of the modern state, for example, is the frontier. By establishing a territorial boundary and exercising absolute control over movement across it, state practices define and help constitute a national entity. Setting up and policing a frontier involves a variety of fairly modern social practices – continuous barbed-wire fencing, passports, immigration

laws, inspections, currency control and so on. These mundane arrangements, most of them unknown two hundred or even one hundred years ago, help manufacture an almost transcendental entity, the nation state. This entity comes to seem something much more than the sum of the everyday activities that constitute it, appearing as a structure containing and giving order and meaning to people's lives. (Mitchell, 1991: 94)

The central thesis of this paper is that territory should be understood principally as an effect of just the kind of "social practices" to which Mitchell refers, though in accordance with much current thinking in geography I prefer the term socio-technical practices. (In fact Mitchell's reference to barbed-wire fencing makes it clear that the material and technical are interwoven with the social in the production of territory.)

These practices are the products of networked relations involving both human and non-human actors. The geographies of such networks differ in important respects from those of the territories (or more precisely the territory-effects) they generate. For one, networks may extend very widely across space and time enrolling distant people and things in the effectuation of territory. In addition the spatial structure of a network may be web-like (multiple, cross-cutting linkages) or more linear (fewer relations organised in series), but in either case it is quite different from that of territory, which is usually understood to involve a bounded and continuous portion of space.

In the second half of the paper I will elaborate these arguments with the help of an empirical case study. First, though, I want to examine the treatment of the concept of territory in human geography in a little more detail, drawing on both Anglophone and Francophone writing. The next section therefore considers two features of that

treatment: the way the concept of territory is commonly taken-for-granted and unexamined, and the over-extension of the term to refer to a remarkably wide range of phenomena. These features suggest there is scope for some re-thinking. Recent work by Jacques Lévy and Michel Lussault points in a fruitful direction by introducing conceptual precision and re-emphasising the irredeemably and actively political nature of territory.

The Concept of Territory in Human Geography

A Taken-for-Granted Concept?

The current importance of conflicts over geographical space is reflected in a growing academic literature on territory and territorial politics. There are now, for example, textbooks on the subject (eg Delaney, 2005, Storey, 2001), and several writers have dealt with it as one of the key terms for the study of political geography (Häkli, 2001, Newman, 1999a, Newman, 1999b, Paasi, 1999, Paasi, 2003) and global politics (eg Elden, 2008). Since John Agnew's path-breaking paper on the "territorial trap" (Agnew, 1994) the geographical literature on territory has expanded considerably. Nevertheless, there is scope for further reflection. Despite growing interest in the politics of territory, and the consequences of a territorially ordered and reordered world, the idea of territory remains under-theorised. According to Stuart Elden "territory tends to be assumed as unproblematic. Theorists have largely neglected to define the term, taking it as obvious and not worthy of further investigation" (Elden, 2005a: 10). While the implications of territory are hotly debated, the concept itself, its genealogy, conceptual preconditions and even its precise meaning have been given less attention. In writings on the growing importance of territory it is common to find either that the word is left undefined and its meaning simply assumed or that a single straightforward definition is offered without critique or further discussion.

This may not matter for the cogency of the argument of any particular piece of writing, but taken together it signifies something of a collective disregard for the conceptualisation of this increasingly important idea.

In their introduction to an important collection of essays on *War, Citizenship, Territory*, Deborah Cowen and Emily Gilbert introduce the concept of territory thus:

“Territory” is a term that is often used interchangeably with land or space, but it connotes something more precise. Territory is land or space that has had something *done to it*—it has been acted upon. Territory is land that has been identified and claimed by a person or people. [...] It is a bounded space to which there is a compulsion to defend and secure—to claim a particular kind of sovereignty—against infringements by others who are perceived to not belong. (Cowen and Gilbert, 2008: 16)

This formulation is a fairly typical, and comparable definitions abound. According to David Storey, “territory refers to a portion of geographic space which is claimed or occupied by a person or group of persons or by an institution. It is, thus, an area of “bounded space”.” (Storey, 2001: 1). For David Delaney, a territory is “a bounded social space that inscribes a certain sort of meaning onto defined segments of the material world” (Delaney, 2005: 14). In the view of Kevin Cox, territory and territoriality are “the core concepts of political geography” and

territory is to be understood through its relations to those activities we define as territorial: the exercise of territoriality, in other words [...] this means that in addition to territory having associations of area and boundary it also has ones of defense: territories are spaces which people defend by excluding some

activities and by including those which will enhance more precisely what it is in the territory that they want to defend. (Cox, 2002: 2-3).

All these definitions are strikingly similar. In terms of rhetoric, they are assertions: “territory is A” or “territory is B”. Apart from the opening sentence of the Cowen and Gilbert quotation, the reader gets little sense that there may be divergent concepts associated with the signifier “territory”. To be fair, the texts from which these quotations are taken contain much more extensive discussions of the complexities of territory. My point is that it is rare for such discussions to open with an explicit acknowledgement that the term is freighted with diverse and perhaps competing meanings.

An Over-Extended Concept?

In fact, diverse and competing meanings abound in the ways the word territory has been used in practice. According to Michel Lussault the concept has become wildly over-extended:

Numerous social sciences (geography, of course, but also anthropology, sociology, economics and political science) seek to outdo each other in their use of the notion of territory – and its variants, such as the adjective territorial, occasionally nominalised, and the noun territorialisation – most often without any real precise, explicit and stable definition. (Lussault, 2007: 107)

Bob Jessop, Neil Brenner and Martin Jones label this tendency “methodological territorialism, which subsumes all aspects of socio-spatial relations under the rubric of territoriality” (Jessop et al., 2008: 391). As Anssi Paasi puts it,

several important dimensions of social life and social power come together in territory: material elements such as land, functional elements like the control of space, and symbolic dimensions like social identity. At times the term is used more vaguely to refer at various spatial scales to portions of space that geographers normally label as region, place or locality. (Paasi, 2003: 109)

The complexities and competing uses of the term have been unpacked by Jacques Lévy in his extended entry on territory [*territoire*] in the Belin *Dictionnaire de la Géographie* (Lévy, 2003b). In fact it is notable that the *Dictionnaire* devotes 10 pages to *territoire*, comprising entries by three different scholars – Lévy, Bernard Debarbieux and Jean-Paul Ferrier. Compare this with the 215 words on territory contributed by John Agnew to the 2000 edition of the Blackwell *Dictionary of Human Geography*. Depending on your point of view this difference in weight reflects either the greater sophistication or the greater confusion to be found in the Francophone literature and debates on territory! (To be fair it should also be noted that the average length of entries in the French text is greater than those in the English dictionary.)

Lévy's entry identifies eight "definitions" or usages, as follows:

1. During the spatial scientific [*moderniste*] phase of geography, territory was rejected in favour of space [*espace*] because of the latter's more "mathematical" connotations and the assumption that the use of the term territory implied a commitment to exceptionalism and the impossibility of comparison.
2. A synonym for space [*espace*] – the converse of 1. Here territory is preferred precisely because it is assumed to be more grounded in historical reality than the more abstract "space". Lévy notes that the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably in the same text.

3. A synonym for place [*lieu*]. A recent usage found in geography, but predominantly in political science and economics, where it has replaced “the local” and connotes a certain rootedness and identity that can function as resources for development. “Territorial” is often used in economic geography to mean something like local as opposed to global.
4. An epistemological move to distinguish the real from the concept. “Territory” refers to socialised space itself while “geographical space” [*espace géographique*] is the intellectual construction that allows it to be thought.
5. A regulated-bounded space [*espace contrôlé-borné*]¹. The oldest and for a long time the commonest definition, recently revived by the Robert Sack in *Human Territoriality* (1986). The predominant meaning of the term in political science and international relations.
6. An animal metaphor borrowed from ethology and biology. Exclusive control is often a result of violence.
7. An “appropriated” space [*espace «approprié»*]. An extension of the previous definition. Sometimes used in this sense to refer to the identity component of any space.
8. A historical periodisation. In this usage the history of geography is divided into three phases, corresponding to “*milieu*”, “*space*”, and “*territory*” respectively. In this view, territory, with an emphasis on social and individual identity is posited as an alternative to “geometric Cartesian spatialism”.

Lévy then goes on to outline a series of critiques of these various usages. Each, he suggests, has its advantages, but also its defects. The first four immobilise [*immobiliser*] the term, either by rejecting it, making it take the place of another, or by according it an “excessively general meaning” (Lévy, 2003b: 908). “This is also the case for definition 7, which seems specific, but which in practice designates all social space: what social (which is to say also *natural*) object is not, in some way,

appropriated?" (908). The tendency to use "territory" to refer to portions of space that have acquired subjective or symbolic significance is also unhelpful, Lévy suggests, since all spaces of interest to human geographers have such characteristics. Anglophone geographers' preference for the term place [*lieu*] in this context is no help, Lévy argues, "since it leads to "place" being translated as "territory" and vice versa, two terms both elementary and fundamental, but which no geographer can consider to be synonyms" (908).

The idea of periodisation is also given short shrift, which leaves definitions 5 ("regulated and bounded space") and 6 (ethological). These two definitions, Lévy argues, are specific cases of a larger class of spaces comprising all objects defined by a continuous or topographical "metric" [*métrique*]. The concept of "metric" or "mode of measurement and of treatment [*traitement*] of distance" is relatively unfamiliar in the contemporary Anglophone geographical literature, perhaps because of its spatial scientific connotations. Lévy distinguishes between the two large metrical "families": the topographical, comprising spatially continuous objects, and the topological comprising networks and rhizomes. The outcome of this process of critique and classification is to define "territory" as "metrical topographical space" [*espace à métrique topographique*].

A slightly different spatial typology is developed by Michel Lussault in his recent book *L'Homme Spatial* (Lussault, 2007). Like Lévy, Lussault highlights the confusion that surrounds the concept of territory:

A propensity to use territorial vocabulary without defining its boundaries and specifying its content, to establish it as a universal descriptor of all humanised space, in brief to give in to the magic of the word, is particularly notable since the beginning of the 1990s. The problematic character of the this development,

let us be clear, resides not in the important diffusion of the term, but in its banalisation, that is to say, its propagation in all directions without precise and stable content. In many studies, territory too often becomes a screen disguising a void. (Lussault, 2007: 107)²

Lussault's solution is to distinguish three types of social space in contrast to Lévy's two. These are place [*lieu*], area [*aire*] and network [*réseau*]. Place refers to "indivisible space". The implication is that places exhibit a socio-spatial coherence that would be lost if they were divided. Area, on the other hand, is "topographical, divisible space". An area consists of contiguous space. Networks, Lussault argues, involve "topological, discontinuous space" and represent a space of connection.

Lussault, like Lévy, locates the concept of territory in the topographical category: indeed he argues that territory is the "ideal-type of area". Lussault identifies three main usages of the term in contrast to Lévy's eight. First, he suggests, there is the "common sense" usage that defines territory as "a simple extension of the terrestrial surface, more or less delimited, and supposedly homogeneous" (Lussault, 2007: 108). Second is the political definition of territory, which has the merit of precision. Finally, there is the ethological definition, which is the source, according to Lussault, of the terminological over-extension referred to above.

The Political Valorisation of Territory

In different ways, Levy, Lussault and Paasi all highlight the somewhat divergent discourses relating to territory in the Anglophone and Francophone literatures. This theme has been explored in some detail by Bernard Debarbieux (1999, see also Debarbieux, 2003: 41-43). Anglophone usages tend to be "harder", emphasising juridico-political concerns and stressing (often formal) boundedness and

institutionalisation. In French and other romance languages the senses tend to be “softer”, with terms such as the French *territoire* and Italian *territorio* frequently connoting “region” or “place” (see Lévy’s third definition above). To take a mundane example, the University of Ferrara’s *Centro Ricerche Urbane, Territoriale e Ambientale* (CRUTA) becomes the Centre for Urban, Regional and Environmental Research (my emphasis) in the University’s English language publications. There are, though, exceptions in both cases. In the case of English, the OED recognises a politico-juridical definition (“the land or country belonging to or under the dominion of a rule or state”), an ethological definition from zoology (“an area chosen by an animal or a group of animals and defended against others of the same species”), and this: “a tract of land, or district of *undefined boundaries*; a region”. So much for the taken-for-granted assumption that territories have to have boundaries... In addition there are a number of familiar figurative uses of the term in English. Conversely, as we have seen from the work of Michel Lussault, there are Francophone proponents of the view that *territoire* can and should be defined primarily in political terms (see also Allières, 1980, Raffestin, 1980).

These complexities and ambiguities reflect (and arguably arise from) the uncertain etymology of the term. According to the OED it comes from *territoire* (French), which derived in turn from *territorium* (Latin) meaning the land around a town. *Territorium* is commonly assumed to be linked to *terra* (earth) but it may also have arisen from *terrere*, meaning to frighten or terrify which also gave *terror* (frightener). *Territorium* thus meant “a place from which people are warned off” (Roby 1876: 363). According to the seventeenth century Dutch jurist Grotius,

The origin of the word “territory” as given by Siculus Flaccus from “terrifying the enemy” (*terrendis hostibus*) seems not less probable than that of Varro from the word for ploughing (*terendo*), or of Frontinus from the word

for land (*terra*), or of Pomponius the jurist from “the right of terrifying” (*terrendi iure*), which is enjoyed by the magistrates. (Grotius, 1964: 667)

The link with fear has a particular contemporary resonance. Sextus Pomponius, cited by Grotius, was a second century Roman jurist. His definition of “territory” is reproduced in the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, the great codification of Roman law undertaken for the Emperor Justinian in the sixth century:

The word “territory” means all the land included within the limits of any city. Some authorities hold that it is so called, because the magistrates have a right to inspire fear within its boundaries, that is to say, the right to remove the people. (Digest, L. xvi. 239.8)

This reveals a legal and political connection (if not a definitive etymological one) between “territory” and fear and exclusion that dates back to one of the earliest recorded definitions of the term (Connolly, 1995: xii). The present “war on terror” has led some writers to revive the connection between territory and terror (Anidjar, 2004: 54-60, Cairo, 2004, Hindess, 2006).

Although etymology can be suggestive, it is not a substitute for conceptual clarification. Lussault’s criticism of the over-extension of territory resonates with the recent call by Bob Jessop, Neil Brenner and Martin Jones for greater precision in the use of spatial terminology (Jessop et al., 2008). Having whittled down through critique his list of eight uses of territory Jacques Lévy’s settles on a definition that includes the “regulated-bounded” (*controlé-bordé*) sense of territory, but also admits ethological usages. While it may be case that ethologically defined spaces meet Lévy’s criterion of being topographical, and that zoologists will continue to refer to

them as territories, my view is that to include them within the geographer's definition of territory gives too much ground to socio-biology.

Lussault's own definition of territory eschews the term's ethological connotations and focuses squarely on the political structuring of space. Territory is a "space structured by principles of contiguity and continuity" which "depend less on the material aspects of space than on the systems of ideas (*systèmes idéels*) that frame the space in question, as well as the related practices that take place there" (Lussault, 2007: 113). For Lussault, it is the *political valorisation* of the spatial continuity and coherence of a delimited area that defines the specificity of territory vis-à-vis other types of space (2007: 113-114).

As Lussault puts it, the dominant ideology at work here invokes the "indispensable *continuum* of the "territorial fabric" («*tissu territorial* »)" (2007: 114). He argues that, "in France, particularly, this is accompanied by a denial of the "tearing" («*déchirure* ») [of the fabric] because this would suggest a "social fracture" («*fracture sociale* »)" (2007: 114). This involves

a powerful territorial representation, used constantly by political actors to make the different elements of their space of action "hold together", to solidly link discrete units – places, areas – and thereby to contribute to the production of the continuity necessary for the existence of legitimate territory. (Lussault, 2007: 114)

"Political actors", says Lussault, "are territorial. They seek and valorise spatial continuity, whether their territory of reference is local, regional or national" (2007: 113-114).

Producing Territory-as-Effect: an English Example

Administrative Regions as Territories

In the remainder of this paper I want to examine how these effects of contiguity, continuity and boundedness, are produced and, as Lussault put it, “valorised”. I aim to show that the production of “territory-as-effect” can be understood as the outcome of (networked) socio-technical practices. This in turn challenges the widespread assumption that territorial and network understandings of space are incommensurable.

I will development my argument through a case study of the English administrative regions. Excluding the special case of London, which has an elected mayor and assembly, there are eight regions in England, each of which is administered by a Government Office and a Regional Development Agency whose activities are overseen by an appointed Regional Assembly comprising local politicians, business people and representatives of the public and voluntary sectors. Like “territory” the word “region” is freighted with a wide range of contested and sometimes conflicting meanings. Not all regions are territories or vice versa. However, the eight English regions do constitute territories (or territories in formation) in Lussault’s sense, that is, they are represented as delimited, contiguous and coherence political spaces.

Although England’s regional institutions have a variety of functions and are involved in a range of policy domains, one of their most prominent roles is to promote economic development. Economic activity is not structured principally in terms of territory in Lussault’s sense of the term, bearing in mind that Lussault explicitly distances his definition from the over-extended notion of territory common in political economy and economic geography. However, the exercise of regional

administrative power in the economic field results in the production of territorial understandings of economic practices and processes. One such understanding is the idea of “the regional economy”.

“The regional economy” is continually invoked in public discourse by political actors, officials, experts, journalists, commentators, organisations in civil society, business people and even (occasionally) members of the public. I suggest that, in the case of the English regions it is one of the most significant elements of the “territory-effect”. The possibility of conceiving of “the regional economy” as a focus of policy requires the constitution of a spatio-political object with a number of specific features, including Lussault’s trio of delimitation, contiguity and coherence. Crucially, the world of economic activity, of the production, consumption, distribution and exchange of goods and services need not, and usually does not, have any of these features.

The space of the regional economy as policy object must be *delimited* because the institutions that act on it have delimited jurisdictions. Thus One NorthEast, the regional development agency for north-east England has no powers to intervene in the workings of London’s financial services sector, or in the global commodities market, even where these have a direct impact on economic activity in its “patch”. The space must also be *contiguous*, first because the regional economy as policy object is understood as a functional whole whose parts are joined by material linkages that are themselves part of that whole and second because movement (whether of goods, people, money, or information) between the parts is assumed also to take place within the space of the whole.

Of course there are instances of non-contiguous territories, including enclaves, exclaves, and divided states. Examples include Pakistan between 1947 and 1971,

west Berlin prior to German reunification, and Gaza and the Palestinian-controlled areas of the West Bank. However, these are exceptions that prove the rule, in the sense that they are examples of flawed territories for which special arrangements have to be made. The case of West Bank, in particular, reveals the near impossibility of arranging any kind of effective public administration for a fragmented territory; it seems like that this would still be case even if the hostile relationship between Israel and the Palestinian Authority were resolved. By contrast, the Israeli-controlled areas in the Occupied Territories are destined to be contiguous as a result of the construction of an elaborate road network that passes over, under or through Palestinian areas without being part of them. Portions of territory separated only by navigable water are non-contiguous in a less important sense. Examples include the French DOM-TOMs, the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, Kaliningrad and numerous islands. While cases such as these are often a source of political dispute and may present practical problems they are not *logically* (or perhaps we should say topologically) non-contiguous provided the possibility of access is maintained.

Finally, the space of the regional economy as policy object must be *coherent*. All economic activity taking place within the space is assumed to form part of the regional economy, which is then understood as a totality. That is, the interacting parts are thought to constitute a whole that can be treated for policy purposes as a unit, albeit one that is heterogeneous and differentiated.

In the case of the English regions, the effects of territorial delimitation, contiguity and coherence are generated partly by the socio-technical constitution of the “regional economy” as an object of policy. How does this happen?

Effectuating Territory Technologically

The short answer is “with difficulty”. Giving effect to territory in this way involves the mobilisation of a whole series of governmental technologies and what Andrew Barry (2001) has called “political machines”. Barry argues that “a distinction can be made between a *technical device*, conceived of as a material or immaterial artefact, and a *technology*, a concept which refers not just to a device in isolation but also to the forms of knowledge, skill, diagrams, charts, calculations and energy which make its use possible” (2001: 9). From this perspective, effectuating territory requires considerable inputs of labour, expertise and other resources. Moreover, the work involved is continuous and repetitive. Delimitation, contiguity and coherence have to be constantly reproduced to sustain the effect of territory through time. To take a simple example, international border controls are only effective for as long as those enforcing them turn up for work each day. Territory doesn’t just happen, it has to be worked for. This is not the same as saying that “territory is the product of social construction”: “to say that a technology can be political is not ... to claim that technical devices and artefacts are “social constructions” or are “socially shaped”: for the social is not something which exists independently from technology” (Barry, 2001: 9).

What kinds of work and technologies go into the effectuation of territory in the case of the English regions? In recent years they have included:

- numerous *regional strategies* (regional economic strategies, regional spatial strategies, integrated regional strategies and many others)
- policy reviews such as the British government’s 2007 Review of Sub-national Economic Development and Regeneration (usually known as the *sub-national review* or SNR)

- *statistical measures* of economic activity and performance at the regional scale
- a network of *regional observatories* such as the North East Regional Information Partnership (NERIP)
- international *benchmarking studies* such as the OECD's territorial reviews
- cartographic mapping such as the Ordnance Survey's "points of interest"
- modelling and forecasting such as the North East Regional Economic Model devised by Durham Business School
- *target-setting* and *auditing* including through public service agreements (PSAs)

I do not have space for a detailed consideration of each of these, so I will take the case of target-setting as an example.

Public service agreements (PSAs) were an innovation introduced by the Tony Blair's New Labour government in 1998 shortly after it came to power (*Financial Times*, 1998). They were invented by Gordon Brown (then Chancellor of the Exchequer (finance minister)) and have been a centrepiece of the government's attempts to reform the public sector. The PSAs are formal agreements between HM Treasury (finance ministry) and so-called spending ministries including those responsible for health, transport, education, work and pensions, and defence. The agreements set out the level of service, investment or activity expected in each area of public service and the performance targets that ministries and their related public bodies are expected to achieve. Politically, the PSAs are a quintessential New Labour device. Their introduction represented a quid pro quo in which the government agreed to provide substantial new investment in public services in exchange for assurances about improved performance. As such they reflected a nervousness on the part of the incoming Blair administration that in the post-Thatcher world the electorate was lukewarm about increased public expenditure and needed reassuring that the money would feed through into tangible improvements in service provision. They

thus sit within a wider neo-liberal discourse that casts the state as, at best, a necessary evil, and one that needs to be constantly watched lest it become bloated and parasitic.

Since 1998 the PSAs have been regularly revised alongside successive comprehensive spending reviews (CSRs) the announcement of new three-yearly spending rounds. In the case of regional economic performance Table 1 shows how the relevant department's aims and objectives have been modified following successive spending reviews and how the PSA target itself has been worded.

The most recent (2007) revision has seen two notable changes. First, PSA targets are now cross-departmental. This change recognises that many of the problems that government policies address do not sit neatly within the remit of individual government departments. Improving regional economic performance cuts across the work of the departments of business, transport, work, and universities and innovation as well as the local government department which is the "home" department for regional affairs. Second, there has been a reduction in the number and complexity of the PSA targets. The new PSA target relating to regional economic performance is much simpler than earlier versions. It reads:

PSA 7: Improve the economic performance of all English regions and reduce the gap in economic growth rates between regions.

Each PSA target has designated indicators intended to allow an assessment of whether the target has been met.

For target 7 these are:

1. Regional Gross Value Added (GVA) per head growth rates
2. Regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head levels indexed to the EU15 average
3. Regional productivity as measured by GVA per hour worked indices
4. Regional employment rates

Let's examine the first of these in a bit more detail. Gross value added (GVA) is a measure of economic production. It is defined as the value added in the process of production which is equivalent to the value of total output less the value of raw materials consumed in the process of production ("intermediate consumption").

Although government economists and accountants treat GVA as a neutral, technical accounting measure, it has a complex and contested history and geography. Most recently it has spread rapidly through the British public sector. For instance, out of 163,000 hits in an internet search for "gross value added" 43,600 were from the gov.uk (British government) domain but only 1,860 were from the .gov (US government) domain. This is a direct consequence of the imposition of the PSA target described above, as is the fact that 47 of the top 100 hits in the search are websites of UK local or regional government institutions. Many of these documents describe GVA as an important indicator of economic performance, without explaining that it has become important because of target-setting by central government. Thus the agency of the state is disguised and the scope for debate about alternative measures (such as those relating to environmental sustainability or to health and well-being) is reduced.

The burgeoning literature³ on critical accounting studies provides an alternative view of GVA and related concepts. Stuart Burchell, Colin Clubb and Anthony Hopwood (1985) have examined the rise of the notion of "value added" in Britain in

the 1970s. They point out that value added became an important policy concept at a time of widespread industrial unrest, high inflation and restrictive incomes policies. The Labour governments of the time had no wish to endorse the overthrow of capitalism, but they also recognised that the vocabulary of profits and profitability in discussions of economics risked fuelling discontent in the labour movement with government policy and alienating the Labour Party's core constituency. In that context the discourse of value added implied that industrial production was a collaborative national effort. In place of a potentially divisive focus on private profit, the fruits of economic activity (value added) could be presented as being shared between capital in the form of profit and labour in the form of wages. Burchell et al. suggest that this means that value added can thus be seen as a conservative concept. At the same time it can also resonate with the political left by emphasising the legitimacy of worker's share of output. It also perhaps echoes the Marxian labour theory of value.

In 1998 the UK adopted a new set of standards for the production of the national accounts. These were in accordance with the 1995 European accounting standards (ESA95) which were based in turn on the new 1993 agreed international standards for national accounting.⁴ To mark the introduction of the new standards the British government published a set of six A4 format reference volumes including *National Accounts Concepts, Sources and Methods* running to 646 pages. *Concepts, Sources and Methods* provides a detailed description of how the national accounts are compiled, which is in itself a dramatic illustration of the extraordinary labour that goes into the calculation and monitoring of national economic activity, and of the thoroughly artefactual, even fictive character of the national accounts.

Concepts, Sources and Methods identifies the production account (defined as "Account I" in ESZ95) as the core of any set of national accounts "as it records the activity of

producing goods and services” (Office for National Statistics, 1998: 59). The production account records the total value of goods and services produced (output) and the total value of raw materials used up in the production process (intermediate consumption). The difference between the two, which is the balancing item on the production account, is gross value added. Thus an interesting feature of gross value added is cannot be measured directly, but as a balancing item it is instead inferred (GVA = output *less* intermediate consumption). Net value added can be calculated by also deducting an allowance for capital depreciation.

According to *Concepts, Sources and Methods*, “gross value added is a measure of the contribution to GDP made by an individual producer, industry or sector, and primary incomes are paid out of it; so it is carried forward into the distribution of income accounts” (Office for National Statistics, 1998: 5). Among other things, the distribution of income accounts, show how GVA is “distributed to institutional units with claims on the value added created by production. This shows income from employment (wages and salaries, employer contributions to pension schemes), operating surplus (profit) and mixed income (mostly self-employment income)” (Office for National Statistics, 1998: 5). The use of the word “claims” here is notable, though the public accounting standards unsurprisingly do not discuss the power relations that underlie claims-making or the political processes through which differential claims are made effective.

The distribution accounts allow alternative ways of calculating GVA to be identified. Since all GVA is distributed, the total amount of GVA can be calculated by adding together employee compensation (wages, salaries and employer pension compensation), profits and the proceeds of self-employment. Similarly, since wages and profits are either spent on final consumption or saved GVA in given period

must also be equal to the sum of expenditure and saving. Quantitatively, therefore, the following are all equal to GVA:

- output *less* intermediate consumption
- wages *plus* profits
- expenditure *plus* savings

In principle, these arithmetic equalities allow GVA to be calculated not just for the national economy as a whole, but also for component elements such as individual organisations, sectors and regions. For example, for a non-profit-making organisation, such as a university or a public hospital, GVA is equal to wages (plus operating surplus, if any). The concept of GVA is therefore agnostic about whether value is added by the private, public or voluntary sector and might be seen as running counter to neo-liberal assertions that the private sector is the only productive part of the economy.

Each mode of calculation should produce the same quantitative results, but in each case the presence of GVA is being derived from other variables. It is in the peculiar nature of commodities that it is not possible to look at a finished product, such as a car or a table, and work out directly what proportion of its value was produced by whom. As Marx put it in *Capital*, “the use-values coat and linen are combinations of, on the one hand, productive activity with a definite purpose, and, on the other, cloth and yarn; the values coat and linen, however, *are merely congealed quantities of homogeneous labour*” (Marx, 1867/1976: 135-136 emphasis added). GVA itself is unobservable, virtual: a kind of ghostly presence, which becomes more spectral still when we examine how it is computed in practice at the regional scale.

The UK government does not produce a full set of public accounts at the regional level (Office for National Statistics, 1998: 13) and *Concepts, Sources and Methods* does not detail how regional GVA should be calculated. Instead, the Office for National Statistics has published a separate guide to the methodology for the compilation of regional accounts and the calculation of regional GVA (Office for National Statistics, undated). Regional GVA is calculated using the income approach (GVA = wages *plus* profits). Moreover, “a “top-down” approach is used to calculate regional figures, whereby the national aggregate is allocated to regions using the most appropriate measure of regional activity, or regional indicator, available” (Office for National Statistics, undated: 5). The annual calculation of regional GVA is a legal European Union requirement and informs EU funding decisions. Regional GVA must be broken down by industrial sector (industry group) and disaggregated to sub-regional levels (NUTS2 and NUTS3).

The choice of the income-based, rather than production-based, mode of calculation was a pragmatic one determined by the available data sources. The top-down approach involves apportioning a share of the various income components of national GVA to each region based on information from a variety of data sources. Some of these are survey-based, such as the Annual Business Inquiry survey, the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, and the Labour Force Survey. Others are what is described as “administrative data sources” such as information collected through the processing of tax and national insurance payments. Although not explicitly stated in the published methodology, the partial reliance on data from sample surveys means that figures for regional GVA must be considered to be estimates, and subject to sampling error. At the NUTS1 (regional) level, GVA is calculated on both a residence and a workplace basis. Where net inter-regional commuting is an important factor (principally in south-east England) the two methods may produce significantly different figures. The workplace-based figure

reflects the actual location of production and is required under the European accounting standard ESA95.

Profits (approximately 20% of the total) present practical problems. Although not much detail is given, the *Regional Accounts Methodology Guide* states that profits of corporations are allocated partly in proportion to employee earnings. On the face of it this seems to assume that the ratio between wages and profits is constant between regions. There are also conceptual problems here. In what sense do profits have a regional location? In the terms used by the *Concepts, Sources and Methods* volume, they represent a “claim” on GVA by proprietors or shareholders. These may be individuals who reside and/or raise capital outside the region, or they may be national or international institutions who have no regional “home”. For the Northern Rock bank was regarded as a mainstay of the economy of north-east England. It is headquartered in Newcastle, but its shares are traded on the London stock exchange and could have been bought by anyone looking to invest capital denominated in sterling. When Northern Rock was profitable in what sense did its profits “belong” to the north-east region? Are its more recent losses really the north-east’s losses? These kinds of questions go to the heart of the issue of territory. They problematise the very idea of a regional economy as a bounded space and highlight its artefactual character.

Commentaries on the usefulness of GVA have included some notable criticisms. According to a report from the Institute of Public Policy Research, for example,

GVA has limitations in that it includes only goods and services sold in the market sector of the economy, or goods not sold on the market whose value is imputed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for the purpose of compiling the statistics (for example, many public services such as health and

state education). It misses out household production and includes no measure for many of the things that people value in life – the environment, community cohesion, relationships with friends and family, arts and culture, and so on. Hence it is a highly imperfect measure of the “well-being” of the North. (Johnson et al., 2007: 9-10)

The authors go on to claim that “nonetheless, GVA is readily measurable to an internationally agreed standard” (Johnson et al., 2007: 10) which is questionable given the labour intensive nature of the process involved that has been highlighted above, and the potentially uncertain accuracy of the resulting estimates.

An overreliance on GVA as the key measure of economic performance was also called into question by a Parliamentary committee in 2003:

We also received evidence that the current indicator proposed for the measurement of performance against this target, regional Gross Value Added per head, is not fit for purpose and recommend instead the use of a basket of measures including productivity, employment and unemployment rates, household income and quality of life. (House of Commons ODPM Select Committee, 2003: 3)

As we have seen above, some of these additional indicators have been included in the latest PSA, although not those relating to household income and quality of life.

Despite these criticism, GVA remains the principal measure of regional economic performance. It is, though, only one of dozens of governmental technologies that together define and bring into being a political object, “the regional economy”, which in turn contributes to the effectuation of region-as-territory. Through the

action of these technologies, the effects of delimitation, contiguity and coherence that allow regions to be understood as territories are generated by, for example, the apportionment of otherwise nomad flows of energy (including labour power), matter, money and information to one geographical area or another. These flows are thus, in a sense, subject to territorial coding. However three immediate caveats to this suggestion need to be entered.

First, flows are coded *for* (or *to*) a territory rather than *by* territory. Territory is an effect of such coding: it does not itself function as an actor, a political subject, or a governmental technology. According to Andrew Barry (2001: 3), “government operates not just in relation to spaces defined and demarcated by geographical or territorial boundaries but in relation to zones formed through the circulation of technical practices and devices.” But I want to go further and suggest that geographical and territorial boundaries are themselves also formed by “technical practices and devices” – boundaries (delimitations) are not outside technology and do not pre-exist it. Second, the territorial coding of flows, whether retrospective in the case of accounting and auditing technologies or prospective in the case of forecasting and modelling technologies, is not the same as capture which involves the material binding of that-which-is-flowing in specific assemblages. Thirdly, neither coding nor capture are permanent. Accumulation may be a defining feature of capitalism but GVA, for example, does not accumulate endlessly “in” a particular territory. Output is exported or consumed, wages are (mostly) spent, and profits are off-shored, consumed, or invested, often elsewhere. To be sure, patterns of uneven economic development may persist for long periods, but they are more like the peaks and troughs of atmospheric pressure on a meteorological chart, constituted by constant flux, than they are like the more static contours on a topographical land map.

Conclusion

This perspective suggests that the territory-effect is the product of networked socio-technical processes in two senses. First, the governmental technologies that produce the effect of territory are the product of spatially extensive networks of human and non-human actors. In the case of my GVA example, the calculation of regional GVA requires the interaction of a host of heterogeneous people and things. These include the internationally agreed System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA93), itself the product of a collaboration between the United Nations, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the World Bank. SNA93 provided the framework for the European accounting standard ESA95, which in turn drove the production of the new UK national accounts. The mobilisation of these accounting frameworks to produce figures for regional GVA requires the collation of data from diverse sources, including surveys, taxation returns and employment records. It involves the acquisition, maintenance and use of computer hardware and software for storage and processing. It makes use of models, maps, and locational data as postcode records. It requires hundreds of hours of work by accountants, econometricians, IT professionals, statisticians, clerks and technical writers, all of whom have to be trained, recruited and managed. Transforming the calculations into information that can be accessed and used by non-specialists involves web-designers, publishers, researchers and journalists. The use of this information to make judgements about whether targets have been met involves civil servants and politicians. And all this activity depends on material infrastructures of data networks, routers, filing systems, disks, air conditioning systems, stable electrical supplies and so on and on. Most of such heterogeneous networks extend geographically well beyond the confines of any individual regional, or even national territory.

Second, the matter, energy, information and money that technologies such as regional GVA code to one regional territory or another are themselves both the products of and mobilised by socio-technical networks. It has been fashionable in recent years to ascribe regional economic growth to endogenous factors, such as territorially specific stocks of tangible and particularly intangible assets. But most assets are themselves heterogeneous networked phenomena, and when they are examined closely it is difficult to determine which are endogenous and which are not. Take workforce skills and knowledge, one of the principal categories of intangible assets. Professional skills and knowledge typically depend on extensive national and international networks of education, training, assessment, continuing professional development, regulation and exchange. And craft skills, which are often thought of as more locally rooted, are also increasingly trans-territorial. Today, after all, even winemaking, that apparently most soil-bound of all crafts, is subject to extensive inter-regional and international transfers of knowledge, information, technology and capital.

So the territory-effect is generated by and depends on networked relations. This conclusion runs counter to the widespread view in geography that “territory” and “network” are incommensurable forms of spatial organisation. For example, Manuel Castells, writing of the contrast between the space of places and the space of flows, refers to “a structural schizophrenia between two spatial logics” (Castells, 1996: 428). Both Jacques Lévy and Michel Lussault draws a similarly sharp distinction between the topographical metric associated with territory and the topological metric associated with rhizomes and networks (Lévy, 2003a: 608, Lussault, 2007: 131).

In *Les Territoires du Risque*, Valérie November posed the question of whether “the notions of network and territory can be articulated together or whether they correspond to two different explanatory orders” (November, 2002: 273).⁵ The

evidence of the spatial effects produced by governmental technologies such as GVA suggests that network and territory can be articulated together – indeed they always are. But the relationship is not symmetrical. Territory is not the timeless and solid geographical foundation of state power it sometimes seems, but a porous, provisional, labour intensive and ultimately perishable and non-material product of networked socio-technical practices. To return to Timothy Mitchell’s suggestion that the state “should be examined not as an actual structure, but as the powerful, metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist” (1991: 94), it seems perhaps appropriate to conclude that territory should be examined not as an actual state space, but as the powerful, metaphysical effect of practices that make such spaces appear to exist.

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Endnotes

¹ The French word '*contrôlé*' usually means 'checked', 'supervised', or 'examined' rather than 'controlled' in the English sense of 'governed' or 'directed', which makes a precise translation of Lévy's term difficult. 'Regulated' is not a precise translation, but seems to capture the meaning better than 'controlled'. It is not intended as a reference to regulation theory!

² 'Une propension à user du vocabulaire territorial sans en circonscrire le contour et préciser le contenu, à le dresser en descripteur universel de tout espace humanisé, bref à céder à la magie de ce vocable, est particulièrement notable depuis le début

des années 1990. Le caractère problématique de cette évolution, entendons-nous bien, ne réside pas dans la diffusion importante du terme, mais dans sa banalisation, c'est-à-dire sa propagation tous azimuts sans contenu stable précis. Le territoire dans nombre d'études devint trop souvent un écran dissimulant un vide.'

³ See for example the journals *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* and the work of Peter Miller and Anthony Hopwood, among others.

⁴ Much could be said about the impulse for standardisation involved in these developments.

⁵ 'Si les notions de réseau et de territoire peuvent s'articuler entre elles ou si elles correspondent à deux ordres explicatifs différents.'

Table 1: The evolution of PSA targets relating to regional economic performance 1998-2004

Spending Review	Spending Round	Lead Department	Departmental Aim	Relevant Department Objective	Relevant PSA Target
1998 CSR	1999-2002	N/a	N/a	N/a	None.
2000 CSR	2001-2004	Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions	To improve everyone's quality of life, now and for the future, through: thriving prosperous regions and communities; better transport; better housing; a better environment; safer, healthier surroundings; and prudent use of natural resources.	Objective VIII: enhance sustainable economic development and social cohesion throughout England through effective regional action and integrated local regeneration programmes.	17. Improve the economic performance of all regions, measured by the trend in growth of each region's GDP per capita. Joint target with DTI.
SR 2002	2003-2006	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	Thriving, inclusive and sustainable communities in all regions.	Objective I: work with the full range of Government Departments and policies to raise the levels of social inclusion, neighbourhood renewal and regional prosperity.	PSA Target 2. Make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions and over the long term reduce the persistent gap in growth rates between the regions, defining measures to improve performance and reporting progress against these measures by 2006. (Joint target with HM Treasury and DTI.)
SR 2004	2005-2008	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister	Creating sustainable communities.	Objective II: Promoting the development of the English regions by improving their economic performance so that all are able to reach their full potential, and developing an effective framework for regional governance taking account of the public's view of what's best for their area.	PSA Target 2. Make sustainable improvements in the economic performance of all English regions by 2008, and over the long term reduce the persistent gap in growth rates between the regions, demonstrating progress by 2006, joint with the Department of Trade and Industry and HM Treasury, including by establishing Elected Regional Assemblies in regions which vote in a referendum to have one.

Source: HM Treasury spending reviews, 1998-2004