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Contested Territories: Lessons from Interdisciplinary Dialogues on Conflict, Resistance and Alternatives in Latin America[1]

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Abstract

This working paper develops a typology of contested territories to offer a more holistic, interscalar, and interdisciplinary understanding of the spaces, actors, relationships, and processes that determine the emergence, consolidation, and transformation of specific territories. The six types or dimensions examined in this paper are: imagining, fighting over, delimiting, situating, using, and governing contesting territories. By examining these types, we seek to revise and refine the understandings of the multidimensional and multi-thematic nature of contested territories and complement the discussion about territorial accumulation. In addition to highlighting the general and particular questions and the conceptual and methodological approaches that underlie these forms of territorial contestation, we identify different topics that we consider critical for future research and action. This typology results from the analysis of the papers presented at three international workshops held at the universities of Leeds, York, and Sheffield, UK, and the extensive review of recent literature on contested territories in Latin America. Both were part of the research collaboration initiative on Contested Territories in Latin America funded by the White Rose University Consortium.

Keywords

Territory, contestation, resistance, alternatives, Latin America

1. Introduction

Latin America has been shaped both by global economic, political, and social dynamics and the heterogeneous attempts to articulate alternatives at the national and sub-national scales. It has been understood as a peripheral outpost of Europe defined by a need to 'modernize', or an Other to the West shaped by Indigenous projects against colonial Eurocentrism (Munck 2013). In the context of globalization, Latin America is connected to new fault lines in world politics. The 'pink tide'[4] against neoliberalism was, in part, a reaction to the new opportunities for economic growth driven by the commodities boom and the rise of China (Loureiro 2018). But it was also, in some places, driven by a constellation of national movements framing their ideas beyond Western conceptions of 'development', and these became a reference point in global politics.

Recent political changes in Latin America point towards an end of the 'pink tide', a return of (neo)colonial, and neoliberal ideologies, and a shift away from more inclusive and sustainable development approaches. Instead, political and development priorities of current governments (re)centre boosting economic growth through real-estate speculation, infrastructure projects, and (neo)extractivism (Brand, Dietz, and Lang 2016; Burchardt and Dietz 2014; Horn and Grugel 2018). In recent years, such interventions have led to widespread violations of human rights and to the rights of nature. They have also resulted in the displacement of local communities, such as Indigenous peoples and residents of informal settlements. In this context, local communities are often actively involved in resisting displacement, challenging uneven patterns of development, and advocating for alternatives to development based on

grassroots knowledge, including notions such as Sumak Kawsay (Good Living), decoloniality, degrowth, and the right to the city (Escobar 2018, 2020; Gudynas 2016).

The aforementioned processes can be understood and studied through what we refer to here as Contested Territories, a concept in which territory denotes the production and appropriation of space and knowledge(s) in and through often overlapping cultural, economic, environmental, political, and spatial conflicts occurring at multiple sites, places, and scales. This approach moves beyond classical Anglophone understandings which tend to associate territory with a clearly delimited area of land claimed by a sovereign state (Elden 2013). Instead, in our understanding of Contested Territories, we build on scholarship emerging from Latin America, which recognises the multi-scalar and multi-dimensional nature of territory as it is co-produced by multiple actors in contexts of often uneven power relations (Fernandes 2012; Haesbaert 2004; Svampa 2008).

In recent years, a growing number of scholars, including in Anglophone circles and especially in human geography (Clare, Habermehl, and Mason-Deese 2018; Halvorsen 2019; Schwarz and Streule 2020), have further deployed the concept of Contested Territories to make sense of conflict, resistance struggles, and alternatives to development emerging in Latin America. Yet, knowledge on these topics still remains partial and fragmented. This suggests the need for more systematic, sustained, and geographically diverse engagement with these issues, in order to generate broader and deeper understandings at a local and regional level about which actors resist, the role of territory in resistance struggles, when and how resistance occurs, the nature and outcomes of different territorial conflicts, and the articulation of alternatives.

This paper aims to address some of these knowledge gaps, drawing on the results of a collaborative knowledge exchange programme on Contested Territories. As part of this programme, in 2019-20, three international workshops brought together activists and academics from the social sciences, arts, humanities, and environmental sciences in discussions around the conceptualisation of Contested Territories (workshop 1), links to politico-economic processes (workshop 2), and alternatives to development emerging in Latin America (workshop 3). Reflecting on the different interventions from these workshops, coupled with a review of the wider literature, this paper develops a typology of territories in contestation. The aim is to offer a more holistic, interscalar, and interdisciplinary perspective as a starting point for understanding territorial conflict, resistance, and development alternatives in Latin America.

We argue that current scholarship that mobilises the concept of Contested Territories engages with at least six different yet interrelated topics, with diverse but overlapping disciplinary orientations (Table 1). A first and highly interdisciplinary body of work, which we discuss in section three: *imagining territories*, investigates how contested territories are understood and imagined. Drawing on literature around coloniality and epistemic decolonisation, the section focuses on what counts as knowledge in defining contested territories, and what can be done to promote more diverse and emancipatory forms of understanding and imagination. A second body of work, with origins in international relations and peace and conflict studies, focuses on conflict, peace-building, and post-conflict reconciliation and explores the mobilisations of territory in such processes. While we discuss work that falls into this category under the rubric of *fighting over territories* in section four, we also recognise the need to go beyond conflict settings to make sense of other forms of territorial contestation, particularly in 'non-conflict' and urban settings, which nevertheless experience high levels of violence. A third body of work, emerging from sociology and human geography, puts more emphasis on particular sites

of territorial struggle. As we highlight in section five on *delimiting territories*, places situated at the margins, frontiers, or border regions, as well as in-between spaces such as peri-urban zones, which are neither fully rural nor urban, tend to be privileged sites of analysis. Yet, a focus on isolated cases is limiting, as what happens in one setting is often connected to processes occurring elsewhere. This argument is also promoted by a fourth body of work emerging mainly out of human geography, which we discuss in section six: *situating territories*, which examines multi-territoriality and multi-scalar processes of territorial conflicts. A fifth body of work, mainly promoted by political economists and outlined in section seven: *using territories*, explores how conflicts over territory are informed by and shape processes of production, accumulation, the distribution of value, and social reproduction. A sixth body of work, discussed in section eight, focuses on *governing territories* and examines the role of territorial contestation and alternative knowledges (otros saberes) in processes of institutional restructuring, law, policy, and decision making and vice versa. The section highlights tensions between state governance projects, mainly drawing on neoliberal models, and grassroots governance projects. These six interrelated themes suggest that work that mobilises the concept of Contested Territories focuses on different and often conflicting cultural, economic, epistemic, political, social, and territorial practices and imaginaries.

Our findings point to the need to bring together insights from all these bodies of work outlined in our typology. To do so, we highlight the importance of a multi-dimensional approach towards Contested Territories and argue that future research should carefully consider three further dimensions. First, it must be transdisciplinary, moving beyond discipline-specific approaches and grounding in different epistemic, theoretical, and methodological traditions to work across and between these approaches. Second, it must be multi-spatial and multi-scalar, linking sites of territorial struggle with other settings and practices occurring within and between them, in order to fully acknowledge the complex networks and relationships within which these are enmeshed. Third, it must be a multi-stakeholder endeavour that confronts knowledge hierarchies, in order to uncover and pursue more collaborative ways of co-producing and decolonising territorial knowledge.

The working paper has the following structure. Section 2 offers some contextual background on the collaborative knowledge exchange programme 'Contested Territories: Interdisciplinary dialogues on conflict, resistance and development alternatives in Latin America' and introduces the methodology that guided the writing of this paper. The subsequent six sections discuss the different dimensions of our typology, drawing on insights from the literature on Contested Territories and contributions from our three different workshops. The final section concludes and provides some guidelines for future research and practice around each of the different themes developed as part of our typology.

Table 1. Typology of Territories in Contestation: Key themes and questions

Theme	Guiding questions
Imagining territories	• How, and from what positionality, are territories conceptualised and imagined? • What counts as knowledge in the making of territory, and what knowledge counts, i.e., what are the hierarchies and tensions among different forms of knowledge?
Fighting over territories	• What is the significance of territory in conflict, post-conflict, and extremely violent contexts?

Delimiting territories	• Where do territories begin and where do they end? • How and by whom are territorial boundaries established? • How do people and places situated at the margins, borders, and frontiers help us to make sense of contested territories?
Situating territories	• To what extent are scalar processes part of territorial practices and conflicts?
Using territories	• What role does territory play in the process of value creation, expanding accumulation, and social reproduction?
Governing territories	• What is the significance of institutional design and law-, policy-, and decision-making processes in territorial contestation? • How does alternative grassroots governance challenge the neoliberal governance of territories?

Elaborated by the authors

2. Background and methodology

As part of a research collaboration initiative between the Universities of Leeds, Sheffield, and York funded by the White Rose University Consortium, we sought to advance knowledge about Contested Territories through a set of interdisciplinary dialogues that were structured around the following objectives:

1. To offer a space to critically discuss how different kinds of territorial conflict are related to political and development processes across Latin America.
2. To critically examine associated resistance struggles emerging around contested territories in Latin America.
3. To support the systematisation of knowledge about grassroots development alternatives through using innovative epistemological perspectives, theoretical concepts, and creative methodologies.
4. To build early career researcher (ECRs) capacity on project-related topics.

Our main activities included the organisation of three workshops that centred around the topics of Conceptualising Contested Territories (Workshop 1), the Political Economy of Contested Territories (Workshop 2), and Development Alternatives emerging within Contested Territories (Workshop 3). Box 1 provides a brief overview of themes and questions addressed during the three workshops.[5] The first workshop, in Leeds (LWS),[6] focused on objectives one, two, and four and consisted of two keynote interventions by Dr Sam Halvorsen (Queen Mary) and Dr Sofia Zaragocin (Universidad San Francisco de Quito) as well as four panels with a total of 19 presentations delivered mainly by early career academics from different social science disciplines. To build ECR capacity (objective four of our project), we organised a half-day workshop on creative methods training, with emphasis on participatory video making. The second workshop, in York (YWS), linked to objectives one, two, and four of the project and explored territorial conflict and resistance from a political economy perspective. Keynote speakers included Dr Penelope Anthias (University of Durham) as well as Dr Leandro Vergara-Camus (SOAS). The workshop was organised into four panels with a total of 17 contributions

mainly by ECR researchers. To build ECR capacity, we ran a grant writing workshop that was delivered by Prof. Jean Grugel from the University of York. The final workshop, in Sheffield (SWS), focused on objective three. It contained a keynote contribution (delivered via Skype) by Prof. Miriam Lang (Universidad Andina Simon Bolivar) as well as a keynote panel that included Dr Leandro Minuchin (University of Manchester), Dr Claire Wright (Queen's University Belfast), and Dr Catalina Ortiz (UCL). In addition, the workshop was organised into four panels with a total of 16 contributions. All workshops were conducted in a tri-lingual format (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) and involved researchers and activists based in the UK, Europe, and Latin America.

At the end of our last workshop, we ran a collaborative exercise to generate a synthesis of our knowledge and learning exchanges on the topic of Contested Territories. For this activity, workshop organisers and participants were divided into three groups where they discussed, with the help of a set of guiding questions, relevant conceptual and methodological approaches, as well as case study examples. Based upon these discussions, participants created three 'summary manifestos' that posed a series of questions to deepen our collective understanding of Contested Territories. During this activity, we also agreed to draft a working paper that would consolidate this collective learning from the different workshops.

After the completion of the final workshop, and building on the synthesis manifestos, our core team from Leeds, Sheffield, and York (listed as main authors of this working paper) came together and undertook a thematic analysis of the different individual workshop contributions. This analysis led to the identification of the six different yet interrelated themes on Contested Territories outlined in the Introduction. In the subsequent sections, we present these different themes. Each section positions the theme within the wider conceptual literature on Contested Territories that is relevant to its focus. Reflecting on contributions from our workshops, we then provide illustrations of research conducted within each theme before pointing out avenues for future research.

The main authors of this paper are a group of early and mid-career researchers in the social sciences and humanities, who have long-standing professional and personal ties to some of the contexts and struggles described in this paper. We are aware that we have run our workshops and write these reflections in a context of deeply unequal global academic relations, in which our affiliation to Anglophone and British academia has historically situated our work in a position of privilege relative to other languages, geographies, and forms of scholarship. This paper, and the workshops that preceded it, have stemmed from a desire to collaboratively interrogate and contribute to dismantling the persistent epistemic injustices that we observe in and beyond the academy. The practice of collaboration is central to this endeavour and to how we do research more broadly, and has informed how we ran the workshops and curated this paper. Through collaboration, we situate this body of work within a broader transnational network of scholars and activists who are interested in supporting the circulation of bottom-up models of territorial development across places and cultures. Part of this network has clustered around the on-going project Horizon 2020 RISE initiative ContestedTerritories/TerritoriosEnDisputa,[7] to which the paper hopes to contribute.

Box 1. Overview of the three workshops on Contested Territories

Workshop 1: How do we conceptualise and research Contested Territories in Latin America? (20-21 May 2019, University of Leeds). Key questions discussed at the workshop:

- How can the notion of Contested Territories be better conceptualised and theoretically framed to encapsulate struggles and alternatives developed in communities across Latin America?
- What kinds of knowledge, discourse, and political practice are mobilised through the idea of Contested Territories?
- How do Contested Territories relate to radical urban thought and practices emerging in and from Latin America?
- What is the scope for analysing environmental exploitation and extractivism through the lens of Contested Territories?
- How do Contested Territories challenge traditional methodologies and epistemological approaches and encourage alternative ways of understanding critical academic practice?
- What are the ethical implications and repercussions of putting the notion of Contested Territories into practice?

Workshop 2: The Political Economy of Contested Territories in Latin America (26-27 September 2019, University of York). Key questions discussed at the workshop:

- What role does the political economy of natural resource governance and infrastructure speculation play in shaping Contested Territories in Latin America?
- How do different actors (including state institutions, social movements, and the private sector) territorialise particular forms of production, circulation, and consumption?
- How does coloniality shape the region's current political economy and what is the potential for decolonisation in specific rural or urban territories?
- To what extent and how have Latin American territories, spaces, and ecosystems been commodified?
- Who resists the commodification of territory? When and how does this take place? What alternatives emerge from these processes of resistance?

Workshop 3: Development Alternatives within Contested Territories in Latin America (29-30 January 2020, University of Sheffield). Key questions discussed at the workshop:

- In which contexts and how do innovative approaches, framed around the notion of development alternatives, emerge in relation to Contested Territories in Latin America?
- What are the differences between distinct articulations of development alternatives? How can we highlight and reconcile tensions between such different articulations and associated ontological and epistemological positions?
- How are development alternatives being integrated into legal systems and governance mechanisms?
- To what extent and how are development alternatives engaged differently in policy and governance mechanisms on one hand, and in daily practices that shape, negotiate, and appropriate Contested Territories on the other hand?

- What epistemological, theoretical, and methodological approaches are required to make visible bottom-up models of scientific, cultural, political, and economic innovation framed around development alternatives?
- What are the limits to 'development alternatives'? Are they simply 'alternatives to development as usual'?
- What are the convergences and divergences between official rhetoric on development and alternative knowledges epitomised in the Pluriverse? What are the resulting implications for Contested Territories?

3. Imagining territories

Under this theme, we aim to explore how contested territories are seen, conceptualised, and finally, imagined. The discussion is grounded in the understanding that knowledge and imagination are co-constructed—and that the way we make sense of territories determines how we imagine their future, and vice versa. On this basis, the section asks: what counts as knowledge? What knowledge underpins specific processes of making and transforming territory, and what tensions exist between different forms and sources of knowledge? Finally, how do these tensions relate to the enduring legacy of modern/colonial ways of knowing, visioning, and transforming the world? Throughout this paper, we ground our reflection in a relational understanding of territory, which recognises territories and territorial practices as embedded in relations of power. This section explores how such power relations are grounded in processes of knowledge construction and in knowledge politics, and discusses how they might be manifested in the way territories are mis/represented in research, culture, or policy.

Peruvian sociologist Aníbal Quijano (1992, 2007) coined the term 'coloniality' to name the structures of power, control, and hegemony that emerged during the era of modernity and European colonialism, and endure today through multiple forms of oppression and social discrimination. In Quijano's articulation (2007), the coloniality of power constitutes a matrix that operates through four domains: control of authority, control of economy, control of gender and sexuality, and control of subjectivity and knowledge, that is, world-views and interpretive perspectives. Importantly, Quijano and the Latin American scholars who have engaged with the notion—most prominently the intellectuals connected to the grupo modernidad/colonialidad[8]—have argued that the notion of coloniality is intrinsically connected to the idea of modernity; i.e., both the project of colonisation and its contemporary legacy are deeply grounded in modernity's belief in linear human progress, and its faith in absolute, universal truths (Mignolo 2002). As such, coloniality has come into being not only through the violent transformation of territories and peoples into colonies and subjects (colonialism), but also through the universal superimposition of Western knowledge and culture, and the marginalisation and suppression of the knowledges and cultures of subaltern groups (coloniality of knowledge). Among others, Walter Mignolo (2002, 2007, 2009) has further developed the idea of coloniality, centring the notion of de-coloniality and arguing specifically for the necessity of epistemic decolonisation. Epistemic decolonisation is an intellectual project that challenges the hegemony of Western knowledge through practices of 'epistemic de-linking' (Mignolo 2007, 450), 'epistemic disobedience' (Mignolo 2009), and 'epistemic reconstruction' (Quijano 2007, 176). Epistemic decolonisation is required to undo the damage wrought by coloniality through the universal imposition of one authoritative knowledge system, and the disempowerment and destruction of a multitude of other, incompatible knowledge traditions (de Sousa Santos 2015; Harding 2018).

For at least two decades, Latin American decolonial thinkers including Quijano, Mignolo, Escobar, Grosfoguel, Lugones as well as anti-colonial thinkers such as Cusicanqui have deepened and expanded this critique to advocate for alternative ways of knowing and inhabiting the world. Such alternatives point to novel cultural-political configurations that not only depart from, but also challenge, the project of modernity/coloniality, by privileging partial perspective, pluralism, and relationality over universalism, binary oppositions, and mutually exclusive categories. They are often grounded in feminist and Afro-descendent thought, and draw strong links to Indigenous world-views or cosmovisions such as Sumak Kawsay (Buen Vivir),[9] that emphasize living in harmony with nature and one another.

The debate on coloniality and the ways in which plural knowledge systems are situated is central to imagining future territorial formations across and beyond Latin America. This is grounded in an examination of how collective understandings of territory are shaped: exploring how pertinent world-views and value systems inform territorial governance, economy, and culture. Critics and activists have stressed the necessity to map out, imagine, and acknowledge novel territorial configurations that are grounded in diverse knowledge systems and promote decolonial values: for instance, foregrounding the rights of Nature against extractivism (Escobar 2018). In 2011, a network of artists and thinkers connected to the grupo modernidad/colonialidad published a collective statement titled: Decolonial Aesthetics/Estéticas Decoloniales (Transnational Decolonial Institute 2011). Through the statement, the network decisively affirmed decoloniality as a way of thinking and, most importantly, of creatively re-imagining the world: a 'reinscribing, embodying and dignifying those ways of living, thinking and sensing that were violently devalued or demonized by colonial, imperial and interventionist agendas' (ibid.). Centred on non-western ways of life, the collective recognises already existing and future potentials which might otherwise be overlooked.

By engaging with power dynamics at play in the representation of specific territories, many of the workshops' contributions have also explored knowledge and imagination as critical sites of oppression, as well as emancipation. A common thread linking several papers has been examining contested territories as active sites, rather than objects, of knowledge production: 'the place where culture is constructed, and intersubjectivities and visions of the world are produced and reproduced, where the social relations and possibilities for the future are developed, and as a result, where concrete examples of autonomy are realised' (Ceceña 2004, 12 in Clare et al. 2018, 310). In doing so, some of the workshops' contributions have engaged in decoloniality, by critiquing understandings of territory based on modern/colonial rationality, and by emphasising the need to render visible more diverse and situated knowledge systems. In a few cases, contributions have also challenged the critical divide between thinking and doing by examining territorial praxis: foregrounding the embodied character of the production of territorial knowledge and proposing a reflexive approach to territorial practice.

Drawing on these critical positions, at least four approaches to imagining contested territories emerged from the workshops. The first largely draws on feminist thought, and specifically on standpoint methodology, to foreground the primacy of bodily, affective, and experiential ways of knowing. Standpoint methodology shows that all knowledge comes from situated perspectives and particular positions (Haraway 1988) and stresses the importance of seeing the world from the position of those who are oppressed—not only as a means of understanding their experience of oppression, but also as a key tool for mapping out dominant systems of power and social relations (Harding 1993; 2004). Walsh's contribution and the discussion on

body-territory in Section 6 addresses these points. The second theme can be summarised under the heading of 'researching back' coined by Tuhiwai-Smith (2012), and focuses on centring, elevating, and amplifying oppressed knowledge systems, specifically those grounded in Latin American Indigenous and Afro-descendent thought. For instance, Santos de Oliveira (SWS) discussed the roda (wheel) as a key concept in ancestral Afro-Brazilian culture. By highlighting the recurrence of ideas of circularity in Afro-Brazilian culture (samba de roda, roda de capoeira), the paper shed light on alternative understandings of space and time that are grounded in ancestral cosmogonies and do not entail a linear movement towards progress or development. The third theme can be summarised through the notion of prefiguration and focuses on practices of territorial construction that materialise ways of being and acting otherwise. The idea of prefiguration was central to the keynote speech by Leandro Minuchin, University of Manchester. Focusing on urban areas in Quito and Buenos Aires, Minuchin's work explores how social movements utilise practices of material construction as forms of prefiguration (Minuchin 2016). A fourth theme focused on the development of epistemological and methodological tools for nurturing collective consciousness and counter-visioning—or for supporting new imaginations of the future. Debates connected to this theme largely build upon Paulo Freire's articulation of participatory action research, which combines education, research, and activism in order to generate emancipatory knowledge and learning (Freire 1970a; 1970b). The theme was most strongly exemplified by Catalina Ortiz's keynote speech which highlighted storytelling as a tool for supporting learning within and across informal settlements in Medellín. Her work is grounded in the notion of sentipensante discussed by decolonial thinker Andrea Botero (2019), understood as a capacity 'to think and feel with the territory', which is explored in the box below (see Box 2):

Box 2. COiNVITE: Activating Learning for Slum Upgrading through Transmedia Storytelling, by *Catalina Ortiz, University College London*

We use the notion of sentipensante as guiding theoretical inspiration. This notion can be understood as thinking and feeling with the territory using ancestral knowledges, collective affection, and people's economies (Botero 2019, 302). We explore how framing storytelling as a modality of sentipensar offers a decolonial approach to urban learning. Sentipensante is a word coined by Afro-Colombian and fishermen in the San Jorge River in the Colombian Caribbean, expressed to Orlando Fals-Borda in his participatory action research in the 1980s. He argued that 'the heart, as much as or more than the reason, has been to these days an effective defense of the spaces of grassroots peoples. Such can be our secret strength, still latent, because another world is possible' (Fals-Borda 2008, 60). This approach underpins the production of empathic knowledge and is connected to the poetics of everyday life. In particular, we focus our research on learning from the social practice embedded in the processes of neighbourhood self-construction and upgrading in the city of Medellín called convites. Sentipensante allows us to trace the urban inscriptions of stories and the multiple ways of syncing territory, body, mind, and heart.

In Spanish, convite designates the celebration of collective actions that result from solidarity and empathy networks among urban dwellers. In Medellín, convite has been a social, cultural, and technological tool for building urban infrastructure at the neighbourhood level with an impact at the city scale. During a convite, learning and knowledge exchange is essential to achieve common goals. The transformation of space is rewarded by the collective affection displayed through public kitchens and collective cooking. In a convite, everyone has knowledge and expertise that can be shared through storytelling and collective practice, something like doing while telling. Convites have played a significant role

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in building the city of Medellín. As a result, we named our project and the—digital and social—platform after this meaningful practice (Ortiz and Millan 2019).

Storytelling brings together other ways of knowing and transmedia amplifies/impacts other ways of learning/doing. The research project 'COiNVITE: Activating Learning for Slum Upgrading: A Co-designed Storytelling Platform for Medellín'—funded by Grand Challenges Research Fund and University College London—explores the power of transmedia storytelling for trans-local urban learning focusing on the slum upgrading experiences in Medellín, Colombia. The project's guiding research question is 'how can cities across regions learn from slum upgrading strategies using transmedia storytelling?' COiNVITE brings together methodological and pedagogical tools to advocate for shifting narratives about intervention in self-managed neighbourhoods, while experimenting with avenues for localising SDG 11 and 17, the New Urban Agenda, and the Right to the City Agenda. Launched in 2019, COiNVITE is the first prototype of a platform for experimenting the intersection of transmedia storytelling, urban learning, and co-design with multiple partners.

A key challenge for effective urban learning is the ability to bring together multiple actors operating at different scales and time frames and who often have opposing perspectives. Building on this, COiNVITE's methodological approach was to first established a learning alliance with multilateral agencies and global coalitions—UN-Habitat, Cities Alliance, UCLG, the Global Platform for the Right to the City and the HIC—, along with the Municipality of Medellín, National University of Colombia, Los Andes University, University of Colorado Boulder, and several grassroots organisations linked to the social movement 'Movimiento de Pobladores' in Medellín, to shape the content of the Transmedia Storytelling Platform and provide their knowledge and expertise in a collaborative way (Ortiz and Millan 2019). This approach urges us to engage in critical urban pedagogies that leverage visual, digital, performative storytelling to re centre the role of urban stories as bridges with epistemic justice (Ortiz 2020).

This project is led by Dr Catalina Ortiz (@CataOrtizA) and Gynna Millan (@Gynaji) (PDRA).

Ortiz examines how the concept of sentipensante can be used as a decolonial praxis for urban studies, urban research, and future imaginaries. In this case, a profound rethinking of decolonial knowledge production is needed in order to reconnect territories, bodies, and people. Throughout the workshops, other participants examined approaches to connect and nurture collective visions and imaginaries. Drawing specifically from the work of Augusto Boal (1995), for instance, Olvera-Hernandez (LWS) discussed the dynamics of territorial control at play in the Lacandon Rainforest in Mexico and illustrated the use of Boal's Forum Theatre as an emancipatory mechanism that fosters social transformations to inform the emergence of territorial consciousness and collective struggle. In a similar vein, De Carli (SWS) highlighted the role of participatory design and planning as means for fostering the emergence of new imaginaries about the future of territories—illustrating a case at the outskirts of Quito, Ecuador. Each of these instances mobilised concepts rooted in non-western histories, practices, and expertise in order to make visible new imaginaries, as well as opportunities for epistemic justice.

4. Fighting over territories

In this section we interrogate the significance of territory in conflict contexts. The idea of territory has long been associated with conflict, and territorial struggles have been framed as a primary cause of international and national conflict (Gibler 2012). In contrast to conceptualisations of territory as associated primarily with the state and its terrain, we follow more recent conceptions of territory as socially produced by multiple actors (see section 1). In this view, fighting over territories is closely connected to the 'overlapping territorialities' (Agnew and Oslender 2010) represented and claimed by diverse interests in the same location. This is particularly associated with contexts in which civil conflict is ongoing or relatively recent, such as Colombia and Central America, but may also affect countries without recent conflict experience, which nevertheless present high levels of violence, such as Mexico and Brazil. From the workshop papers, we identify four themes which speak to these alternative conceptualisations of territory in (post-)conflict contexts: leveraging territory in peacebuilding; mobilisation of territory in post-conflict contexts by different groups; drawing connections between rural and urban settings; and the significance of territory in non-conflict, violent settings. In the discussion below, we explore these themes and show how they relate to existing debates in this area.

Firstly, several papers discussed territorial issues in the Colombian post-accord context, in which the peace agreement of 2016 has given way to a fragile status quo, as a means of understanding how territory is leveraged in peacebuilding processes. Particularly relevant is the idea of territorial peace, conceptualised as part of the peace process between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and internationally lauded as a new and innovative approach to peacebuilding, which would overcome the shortcomings of the liberal peace model (Diaz et al. 2021). As the 'dominant conceptualization of peace' in international relations and policy (McConnell et al. 2014, 17), liberal peace is seen as 'the combination of peace, democracy, and free markets' generally sought by (international) intervention in a given conflict situation (Richmond 2006, 292), based on assumption that 'democracy and economic development create peace' (Bräuchler and Naucke 2017, 422). It is operationalised through 'highly standardised formats' such as Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), formalised peace negotiations, good governance, and economic restructuring (Mac Ginty 2008, 144). Yet its critics question whether peace can be truly attained without addressing the inequalities inherent in the liberal market democracy model, the manifestations of which are often closely tied to the structural (territorial) causes of conflict (Duffield 2005; Cooper et al. 2011).

Both Lombard's and Staples' papers (SWS) explored the potential of territorial peace in Colombia to transcend these issues. Territorial peace, as conceived within the Colombian peace process, was not about resolving threats to the nation-state's territory, but rather, can be understood in three dimensions. Firstly, it was about bringing peace to marginalised rural regions and their communities and, in this sense, it had a redistributional aspect, to be implemented via 'territorial institutions', i.e., decentralised agencies, as well as pluralistic public fora. Secondly, a focus on agricultural land distribution and regularisation was central, although this focus was ultimately diminished due to internal opposition and challenges (Gutiérrez Sanín 2019). Thirdly, its implicit conceptualisation of territory relates to geographical notions of territoriality that see the production of territory as spatial, bounded, and relational, but also to the idea (discussed above) of territory as 'the appropriation of space in pursuit of political projects', involving multiple and overlapping actors, strategies, and

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interests (Halvorsen 2019, 794). This implicit conceptualisation can be seen in the participatory elements of territorial peace, which underpinned its potential as 'not only a peace for the territory, but also from the territory' (Le Billon et al. 2020, 306). This also implied a more pluralistic approach to peace, based on contributions to the peace process from rural, Indigenous, Afro-Colombian and other marginalised groups.

This more expansive interpretation of peace—for and from the territory—was reflected in the FARC's rejection of standard DDR in favour of a Community Reincorporation model as part of the territorial peace approach, as explored in Staples' (SWS) paper (see Box 3). As a highly territorial guerrilla organisation and today a political party, the FARC have undergone dramatic changes both nationally and at the local level. Drawing on extensive fieldwork, Staples' paper explores the dynamics of peace-building and reincorporation in Caquetá, a peripheral region and historical FARC stronghold, where FARC appealed to grassroots discourses and practices as they pursued territorial integration.

Box 3. Reflections on Territorial Peace and Reincorporation in Colombia, by _Henry Staples, University of Sheffield_

The 2016 peace agreement between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC–EP or FARC) and the Colombian government was predicated on 'territorial peace'. The government's ambitious agenda sought both the immediate termination of the conflict and the resolution of its structural causes. This was to be achieved through comprehensive state investment in rural communities, strengthening and decentralising political participation channels, and greater recognition of collective territorial rights: stability that would ultimately drive rural economic development.

The FARC negotiating team drew on the discourse employed by campesino, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian organisations in participatory peace fora (e.g., the Agrarian Development Forum 2012), and in protests (e.g., the National Agrarian Strike 2013). This included direct reference to the concept of Buen Vivir (good living) and the ancestral practices and cosmovisions of Indigenous communities, thereby challenging the government's developmentalist agenda and instead emphasising self-government and differential state regulation (Cairo and Rios 2019). Their proposal for 'Community Reincorporation with a Territorial Focus'—a more holistic, community-centred, and collectivised approach—was to be realised in 26 Territorial Spaces of Reincorporation and Training, with the state providing food, public services, and security, and supporting ex-combatants in establishing collective livelihood projects, for two years.

Agua Bonita is a Territorial Space in the southern Caquetá department, a historical FARC stronghold. Drawing on their campesino origins, ex-combatants established agricultural, agritourism, and other projects. Neighbouring communities, initially anxious over the territorial vacuum left by the FARC's disarmament, nevertheless perceived benefits from the 'institutional glance to the countryside' driven by the peace deal, aided by ex-combatants' concerted efforts to establish social relations (Valencia Aguedo 2019, 6). Yet ruptures to the FARC's unity, the emergence of new dissident structures opposed to peace, and the encroachment of international narco-paramilitary actors pursuing territorial dominance over drug-trafficking routes, have collectively driven violence against ex-combatants and civil society activists alike. Meanwhile, the 2018 election of President Duque, whose outright rejection of 'territorial peace' in favour of a 'peace with legality' framing, cast serious doubts over the future of Territorial Spaces. Facing delays and

growing disillusionment, by December 2018 more than half of arrivals had left in pursuit of individual reincorporation.

Amidst this turmoil, remaining ex-combatants pursued ever-closer territorial integration via a combination of legal, electoral, and contentious channels. Most illustrative is their successful collective purchase of the land; a deal predicated on personal trust and the 'good will' of the landowner,[10] yet struck entirely without government knowledge or consent. Ongoing denouncements of governmental failures and appeals for recognition and resources have been rooted in peace and constitutional rights and (most often) ex-combatants' everyday territorial realities. This strategic combination of tools and discourses speaks to the FARC's long-held ideological mantra, 'todas las formas de lucha' (all forms of struggle), which fused (violent) opposition to state sovereignty with efforts to channel governmental resources through formal means. It also speaks to how Latin American socio-territorial movements pursue 'dual' strategies: resisting and demanding, while also building (Streule and Schwarz 2019, 108)—placing them in relationships of 'mutual dependence or antagonism' with the state (Halvorsen et al. 2019, 1466).

Secondly, and related to this, another theme that emerged from the workshops is related to the mobilisation of territory in (post)conflict settings by different groups, with several contributors highlighting the importance of local versions of peace in post-conflict contexts, in relation to diverse significances of territory. This resonates with post-liberal, hybrid, and everyday approaches which argue that peace is an ongoing process, rather than an outcome (Hammett and Marshall 2017; McConnell et al. 2014). As part of the local turn in peace and conflict studies, these approaches seek to incorporate diverse local conceptions of peace through more systematic and meaningful involvement of grassroots actors, identities, and customs (Richmond and Telledis 2012; Richmond 2006). The focus on place-based constructions of peace and conflict is aligned with the idea of multiple territorial ontologies as part of territorial struggles (Escobar 2008).

These situated understandings of peace and territory could be found in Walsh's (SWS) paper which explored how how feminist healing practices can contribute to transformative justice in post-conflict Guatemala (see section 5 for a detailed discussion). Similarly, Sankey's (YWS) paper on 'repeasantisation' in post-conflict Colombia explored the double effect of neoliberalism and war on the rural poor, through decades of deaths, disappearances, and displacements, alongside newer processes of land concentration, unbridled exploitation of natural resources, and marginalisation of rural producers. Agrarian social movements' struggles against these processes have evolved around the defence of peasant livelihoods and territories, positioning these movements and their members as major historical protagonists within the class dynamics of repeasantisation.

Thirdly, the theme of territory extending beyond the rural sphere, which is often prioritised in peacebuilding processes, emerged from papers highlighting urban and peri-urban territorial issues in violent contexts. Ortiz's (SWS) keynote presentation discussed urban storytelling in the context of Medellín, a Colombian city applauded for its efforts to address violence via urban infrastructural interventions, which nevertheless still experiences high levels of territorially-oriented marginalisation and conflict (see also Box 3). The presentation explored the potential of urban storytelling for urban learning about 'slum upgrading strategies' in Medellín, through a focus on the local practice of convites: collective action and celebration through public cooking. Ortiz argues that such territorially-situated practices can be seen as resistant texts (Winkler 2018) that expose endogenous knowledge systems aimed at building community infrastructure at the neighbourhood level, with a potential impact at the city scale.

Santos de Oliveira (SWS) explored the mobilisation of Afro-Brazilian knowledge and symbolism in urban contexts in Brazil, based on the legacy of resistance of communities which have undergone cycles of physical and structural violence from enslavement to marginalisation. These papers suggest the importance of going beyond rural contexts directly affected by civil conflict to explore different processes relating to the social production of territory, particularly in urban settings with high levels of violence.

This relates to the fourth and final theme which suggests that, particularly in Latin American countries which are known for high levels of violence and inequality, it is important to go beyond 'conflict settings' and consider the significance of territorial struggles in non-conflict settings with high levels of violence, such as Mexico and Brazil. This also relates to the consideration that other types of territorial struggles, such as social and environmental conflict, might overlap with political conflict. For example, Stein's (SWS) paper on climate change and environmental conflicts in Central America, one of the regions of the world most vulnerable to the impacts of severe and extreme weather, explored how the combination of environmental degradation, increasing inequalities, and the absence of the State exacerbates social conflicts. Similarly, Correa and Baron's (SWS) contribution explored territorial conflict around the exploitation of natural gas in Indigenous areas in Bolivia, based on the state's developmental model. This has links to some of the contributions highlighted in other sections, such as *Using territories*, relating to neo-extractivism and the territorial struggles it engenders.

Together, these contributions suggest the need to focus on territorial struggles in (post-)conflict contexts (e.g., Colombia, Central American countries) and how territorial contestation plays out with regard to the particular political, social, and economic issues that (post-)conflict contexts give rise to or engender; as well as the need to take into account contexts that are not experiencing civil conflict, but where other sorts of conflicts and violences are prevalent.

5. Delimiting territories

Throughout the three different workshops, borders represented a central theme and site for exploring territorial conflicts. Participants highlighted questions such as 'how and by whom are territorial boundaries established?' and 'where do territories begin and end?', outlining how different territorial actors and socio-territorial movements across the region offer distinct and contradictory answers. This section discusses three themes—1) the role of physical borders, 2) processes of territorial reconfiguration transcending fixed borders, and 3) shifts from borders to bordering—of particular relevance for research exploring relationships between conflict, territory, and borders.

First, physical borders, such as walls, fences, or rivers, are not natural, but are artificially created, often with the purpose of delimiting specific territories such as the nation state or the city. The establishment of borders, often achieved through land measurement processes, such as cartography, and maintained through violence, policing, or other politico-legal processes (Elden 2013; Mason-Deese 2020), represents a highly conflictive process and is implicated in struggles over power. A central aspect of establishing borders is the control of mobility, allowing those in power to control flows of certain people and goods while rendering others more or less powerless and immobile (Haesbaert 2013c).

In Latin America, as well as other (post-)colonial and settler colonial societies in the global North and South, the process of establishing physical borders often serves to superimpose regimes of capitalist property relations (e.g., by establishing property lines), as well as for purposes of displacing and expropriating people and extracting resources in specific territories (Blatman-Thomas and Porter 2019; Halder and Michel 2018). In such contexts, borders are not drawn around 'terra nullius" (itself a deeply racist and colonial term), but superimposed on lands previously and often still inhabited, managed, and governed by Indigenous peoples who express distinct understandings and relationships to territory and whose territories begin or end within or outside the confines of the (post)colonial/settler colonial state, leading to a situation in which multiple territories overlap (Agnew and Oslender 2010). This was illustrated in our workshops, for example, through in-depth case study illustrations centring around claims for territorial autonomy by the Zapatistas in Mexico (Vergara-Camus, YWS), conflicts around the expansion of commodity frontiers in the Andes (Cottyn, LWS/YWS), and attempts to construct a plurinational state comprising multiple autonomous Indigenous territories within Bolivia (Anthias, YWS; Correa and Baron, SWS; Hope, LWS/SWS; Radcliffe and Radhuber, LWS).

A useful method for depicting the overlap of multiple territories and associated borders, discussed briefly in an intervention by Mason-Deese, Habermehl, and Clare (LWS), is that of counter-mapping. The term counter-maps was originally coined by Nancy Peluso (1995) who worked collaboratively with Indigenous communities in Indonesia, assisting them in generating maps to reclaim their land. However, it has been applied by researchers and activists across the world for many decades. In Latin America, the "New Social Cartography" project led by Alfredo Wagner de Almeida (2018) in the Brazilian Amazon is perhaps one of the most comprehensive attempts to generate a series of counter-maps for Indigenous, quilombola, peasant, and rural worker communities to challenge externally imposed territorial borders and property regimes, as well as to render visible conflicts around dispossession, land use, identity, and territorial rights. The method of generating counter-maps is based on principles of co-production and is extremely open in terms of techniques and legislation, giving people engaged in the map-making process control of what is represented on a map, including whether or not physical borders or administrative boundaries should form part of such representations. If cartography serves to define borders and property lines and, hence, represents an exercise of exerting power, counter-mapping challenges such power relations through the making of maps that create alternative realities, with or without borders (Mason-Deese 2020).

A second theme related to the topic of delimiting contested territories centres around the fact that borders are rarely static, but shift over time and across space as territories expand, decline, or morph into each other. Processes of territorial reconfiguration often generate conflicts that tend to be most visible on and around borders. For example, Horn's contribution (YWS) explored processes of territorial restructuring that occur as part of the expansion of the city of La Paz in Bolivia. The emergence of urban features in the nearby countryside triggered politico-administrative conflicts around land management, service provision, and taxation between local authorities in La Paz and neighbouring rural jurisdictions. These conflicts centre around questions such as: Who has political control over a territory that is neither rural nor urban? What legal and planning mechanisms apply within these territories? Multiple local authorities have different answers to these questions and, in a context such as Bolivia where clear legislation on decentralisation and municipal boundary delineation remains absent or ambiguous, a situation of hyper-regulation emerges whereby regulatory systems overlap, leading to multiple and conflicting pathways on how to govern, manage, and plan spaces in

transition (see also von Benda-Beckmann and von Benda-Beckmann 2014). Such a situation tends to benefit land speculators and real estate investors who make strategic use of and manoeuvre between multiple regulatory regimes. In contrast, informal settlers are trapped in an uncertain situation, experiencing tenure insecurity and violations of their right to the city in a context of urban expansion. Similar to La Paz's ever-changing rural-urban boundary, other border regions tend to be sites of territorial reconfiguration where regulatory systems overlap, are suspended, or entirely bypassed. The last situation is, for example, visible in the Amazonian frontier region between Brazil and Bolivia where, according to the contribution of Filho (LWS), the state remains absent on both sides of the border, enabling a situation in which violence—whether for purposes of expropriation, dispossession, or community protection— becomes the most important tool to exercise territorial control.

Analysing processes of territorial and border reconfigurations, and conflicts that arise from these processes, hence, requires moving from bounded to more processual conceptualisations. Here, scholarship on contested territories could benefit from engaging with recent debates in urban studies around planetary urbanisation that shift from a focus on specific urban places, such as the city, to urbanisation processes. Work on planetary urbanisation conceptualises urbanisation as being configured by the trialectic interplay of concentrated urbanisation (defined as the concentration of population, infrastructure, and politico-economic control and resistance within particular places such as cities), extended urbanisation (defined as urban features appearing in conventionally non-urban settings), and differential urbanisation (defined as various forms of grassroots struggles that express the powerful potential for radical social and political transformation, but which are often suppressed through capitalist industrial development) (Horn et al. 2018). Drawing on the oeuvre of Lefebvre (2003 [1970]), this conceptual approach was initially deployed by Brazilian geographer Monte-Mor (2005) to make sense of the growth of mega-cities such as Belo Horizonte as well as the territorial reconfiguration of Brazil's Amazon region. In recent years, scholars such as Brenner and Schmid (2014, 2015) have further developed these concepts to make sense of processes of territorial reconfiguration across the planet. We argue that such an approach could be deployed to the study of territorial and boundary reconfigurations, as it has the potential to highlight the interrelated, historically layered and often conflicting structural and agential forces that shape such processes.

These first two themes suggest that continuously shifting physical borders can serve as privileged sites to make sense of territorial conflicts. Yet, contributions from our workshops also point to a need to move beyond borders as physical entities and to consider bordering processes as a key arena of territorial conflict, in line with our third theme. This is, for example, outlined by Domenech (LWS) who refers to the whole of South America as a border zone (see Box 4). Such an analysis can perhaps best be understood through the concept of bordering which, following Yuval Davis et al. (2019, 5), we define as 'a principal organising mechanism in constructing, maintaining and controlling social and political order. This mechanism includes determining not only who is and who is not enabled to enter the country, but also whether those who do would be allowed to stay, work, and acquire civil, political, and social rights.'

Box 4. Contested Spaces of Mobility: The South American Migration and Border Regime, by *Eduardo Domenech, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba*

In the last two decades, we can observe the emergence and formation of a South American migration and border regime within the framework of contemporary processes of

internationalisation of mobility control policies. The migration and border regime refers to a space of conflict, negotiation, and contestation between various actors seeking to control cross-border and migration movements in different ways. My argument is that this regional regime has led to the production of a South American space, which can be understood as a border zone resulting from major reconfigurations in the field of migration and border control policies at the global, regional, and national scales. These changes can be interpreted from an analytical framework that considers the instability of institutional arrangements, the heterogeneity of the actors involved in the political field of migration, and the struggles arising from the control of mobility and its contestation. This framework recognises that the new boundaries are the result of processes and mechanisms of internationalisation and regionalisation of movement control, national migration, and regional integration policy measures, and cross-border mobility practices and struggles for movement that constantly challenge the sovereign power of the state maintained by national, intergovernmental, and international bureaucratic agencies. Two crucial moments for understanding the reconfiguration of the South American migration and border regime and the establishment of new boundaries must be considered: one is related to the multiple turbulences generated by the presence of extra-regional immigration from the Caribbean— especially Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba, and sub-Saharan Africa (in particular, migration from Senegal)—and the other is related to the massive emigration from Venezuela, which has been politically produced as a 'migration crisis'. In this context, over the last decade, new contested territories have emerged related to border conflicts, illegalised migrants, and struggles for movement: migrants stranded or trapped by border closures, demonstrations to obtain safe passage to cross borders and continue the route, everyday bordering practices within countries by state- and non-state actors (ID checks by the police but also by employers, shop or restaurant owners), campaigns for documentation, mobilisations and demonstrations against detention and expulsion, among others.

A focus on bordering recognises that the policing and control of borders not only occurs at territorial limits but also within a territory. Recent policy shifts in Argentina are a case in point (Basualdo et al. 2019). Here, the government increasingly adopts what resembles a 'hostile environment'[11] policy. This led to an increase of migration controls at different locations within the country, such as train stations, hotels, restaurants, or residential homes. Controls are not only undertaken by state officials, but also by business owners, landlords, and ordinary residents, producing a situation which Domenech (LWS) refers to as 'everyday bordering'. In addition to shifts in domestic border management, it is also important to recognise that state border control mechanisms increasingly reach beyond territorial boundaries. For example, US border checks begin in Latin American airports and Latin American governments increasingly cooperate with and implement North American migration agendas domestically (Espinoza 2019). As a response to this shift from borders to bordering, resistance struggles against containment and territorial immobility also take new forms and occur in different places. The shift from borders to bordering further suggests the multi-locational and multi-scalar nature of contested territories, a topic explored in further detail in the next section.

6. Situating territories

This section focuses on situating contested territories through examining the scalar relations between different sites, actors, and institutions involved in territorial practice. A clear focus on scale emerged from the workshops, with participants employing different approaches. Several contributors examined the relations linking local to international scales, for instance in

processes of resource extraction and social mobilisation. All these cases clearly exemplified that contested territorial practices operate at different, overlapping scales and that examining how contestations are produced in and across locations and networks is critical to situating contested territories. Scalar approaches enable us to examine the always ongoing construction of territory, in which territory does not operate as a container, but as the product of social relations taking place across scales and spatio-temporal sites. This section interrogates the extent to which such scalar processes are constitutive of territorial practices and conflicts.

This section first addresses the importance of scalar approaches to understanding place and power. Different scholars have approached scale in hybrid ways, addressing particular scalar challenges in occupying and organising territory. Here we focus on a plural multi-territorial approach for examining scalar challenges using one example of the multi-scalar response to territorial conflict through the body–territory, with a case focused on healing for individual and collective reconciliation in Guatemala (see Box 5). While we identify six critical articulations of scalar approaches across the workshops, we focus on the case of the body–territory to acknowledge conflict and healing at different and related scales: the body, community, national.

Critical territorial approaches from Latin American scholars examine the state as one (rather than the only) actor creating and shaping territory. This plural approach to territory examines the diverse range of actors and powers (re)producing space and demonstrates that different scales can be used to examine both political, infrastructural jurisdictions and how social movements and communities create their own territories. In particular, we draw on a multi-territorial approach to examine spaces and relations built between and through territories (Haesbaert 2013a). Haesbaert's notion of multi-territoriality is made up of the practices and experiences of social groups in which 'struggles/social practices themselves continually remake the concept of territory'. A multi-territorial perspective does not focus on the boundary or enclosure of each scale, but rather on the 'mixture of wider and more local social relations', examining specific 'interactions at multiple levels/networks' (Haesbaert 2013b:148). Such an approach is critical for exploring territorial contestation, whereby there are multiple social relations, actors, and networks involved in (re)shaping territory.

To put forward a scalar debate on territory, we find it useful to draw on connections to Anglophone geographical literature and its conceptualisation of place—particularly the work of Doreen Massey. Haesbaert highlights how Latin languages' use of territory is often replaced by place in the English context (2013b). Haesbaert's 'territory' and Massey's 'place' are both 'processual, porous and endowed with multiple identities' (Featherstone and Painter 2013, 11). Based on feminist perspectives, Massey's notion of place puts forth relational, situated understandings of scale through a 'global sense of place' (Massey 1994), which examines both the global and local scale relationally. This approach emphasises relations between different scales, and actors, and how these can be co-constitutive. Analysing contested territories and territorial approaches, Massey's politics of place helps to identify scalar tensions and emphasise the social relationships that constitute them.

A multi-territorial approach to scale examines overlapping power relations operating as 'an intersection of different scales and modalities power' (Haesbaert 2013b, 150). In geographic literature, there has long been a debate into the usefulness of scale as a concept in relation to understanding power in place. Some accounts develop a 'vertical' differentiation in which social relations are embedded within a hierarchical scaffolding of nested territorial units

(Brenner 2005, 9). Such geographic accounts often follow economic categorisations of 'urban, regional, national and local', as well as later additions of scales of the 'body and home' (Marston et al. 2005, 418). Some scalar theorisations have focused specifically on 'under-recognised' sites of labour and work, such as the body and home (Marston 2000; Smith 1992). Further work has focused on specific aspects of one particular scale or the hierarchical importance of each scale. However, other scalar accounts have focused on political agency between and through scales. Such accounts focus on examining 'new landscapes of power and recognition and opportunity' (Howitt 1993) through examining the interplay between scales and how this can be situated. In order to examine territorial contestation, we draw on a plural open approach to scale focused on power and interplay, in order to establish how these contestations come to ground.

When we analysed the workshop contributions, multi-scalar approaches and tactics were used to address different types of territorial contestations. In particular we identified six territorial kinds of contestations that operate with multi-scalar approaches. The first contestation is against/in response to organised infrastructure projects. A multi-scalar approach helps to examine the different forms of organisation of large scale infrastructure projects—instigated by the state, often in collaboration with various enterprises—in comparison to tactics and practices of local organisations, inhabitants, or communities. A second form of contestation is the search for territorial autonomy. While the idea of autonomy tends to focus on local communities and their ability to shape their own territory, such an approach is nevertheless reliant on successful navigation of local and national state practices (to continue autonomous practices). Third, there was an examination of multi-scalar projects and approaches through the creation of solidarity networks which operate between communities, through international links, or by creating and contesting development opportunities through social and solidarity economy initiatives in tourism. Fourth, the way that space is legally regulated and defined, establishes a framework from which territorial responses are designated, yet these scales and laws are sometimes in conflict or contested (see also section 8). In particular, cases were identified in which governance and sovereignty are produced through entangled plural sovereignties and, in some cases, the creation of plurinational states and Indigenous organisations. Fifth, movements create their own spatiality and territories through urban social movements' everyday practices, which highlights the connected and multi-scalar approaches of their theory and everyday practice (Mason-Deese et al. 2019). Sixth, contestations arise in response to the body as territory, which is also based on a specific understanding of social movements' practices which we examine in further detail below.

Seen through this lens, a key concern in the discussion on *situating territories* is the notion of body–territory, proposed by Latin American feminist activists and scholars as a key site of contestation across scales. By understanding the body as territory, Latin American feminists connect 'sexual and reproductive rights with territorial autonomy' (Leinius 2020). These movements are centred on concrete experiences of social movement mobilisations, especially those against extractivism, such as mining, or in movements for food sovereignty (Leinius 2020; Vargas 2017; Masson et al. 2017). The body is a first site of struggle against expropriation, dominance, and control, through which resistance, healing, or inter-connected systems of control and domination are acknowledged and addressed. In this way, various systems of dominance, such as patriarchy, are highlighted—in terms of how this is used to control or define women's bodies, as well as the land (from colonialism to neocolonial systems of violence and everything in-between). Leinius argues that rather than a romantic notion of relational connection of body and land, Indigenous women's movements use the concept of body–territory to 'reveal the historical expropriation of rural and indigenous women' (Leinius

2020:9). As such, Indigenous feminist movements emphasise that their struggles start from understanding the 'expropriation of our first territory of power which is the body' (Cabnal 2012, 60 in Leinius 2020:9), in order to be able to transform other territories. Chivalán and Posocco emphasise the violence of 'vampiric' racialised and gendered expropriation of Indigenous women's bodies as a constitutive part of extractivism, in which 'Indigenous bodies are marked for death, mined and plundered to ensure the future of the body politic' (2020). Further, such intergenerational trauma means that the body-territory is an important site of struggle for peacebuilding, in which a social movement's focus on the body is a means not only of recognising it as a site of life, but also reclaiming spaces connected to trauma (Hayes-Conroy 2018).

Box 5. Feminist Praxis Towards Healing the Body-Territory in Guatemala, by *Aisling Walsh, NUI Galway*

Sanando tu, sano yo, sanando yo, sanas tu, sanamos todes.
(By healing you, I heal myself, and in my healing, you heal, we all heal.)
Lorena Cabnal
Network of Ancestral Healers of Community, Territorial Feminism from Iximulew

Guatemala's colonial regime initiated five cycles of dispossession through extraction and accumulation that have persisted to the present day. These cycles have resulted in social and geographical reconfigurations of the body-territory including the mass dispossessions of peoples from their territories, the extraction of labour from peoples through enslavement, feudal master-serf relations, and other bio-political techniques of expropriation, in which the 'nexus territory-body and territory-land corresponds to a multiplicity of ways of producing death and life simultaneously' (Chivalán and Posocco 2020).

One of the many expressions of resistance to these cyclical patterns of violence is the movement toward responses focused on healing the body-territory through collective healing processes that are intimately tied to broader projects for social and political transformation. According to founding member of the TZ'KAT, Network of Ancestral Healers of Community, Territorial Feminism from Iximulew, Lorena Cabnal, 'there is a historical territorial dispute between women's bodies and the earth and Indigenous women have had their bodies expropriated just like the earth.' (Fulquet 2017, 139). TZ'KAT and other grassroots feminist organisations such as the Centre for Transpersonal Training, Healing and Research, Q'anil, have directed their efforts away from the focus on reparation and reconciliation through criminal law in Guatemala to creating spaces for facilitating individual and collective healing. They accompany women who participate in community struggles against the violence of extractivism reproduced by the government and private enterprise, as well as the reproduction of racist and patriarchal violence within their communities, social movements, and political spaces. This research explores grassroots mestiza and Indigenous organisations that not only create support and community among survivors and activists, but also their own vision of social justice, by and for themselves. This work is understood by TZ'KAT as defending the body/territory by 'weaving the memory of our grandmother's ancestral knowledge and the medicinal, spiritual and political wisdom they left us.'[12]

The case of feminist praxis and the body–territory gives voice to many of the multi-territorial and multi-scalar practices that have been identified throughout this section. Focused on individual and collective healing processes, this work examines the body as territory, relationally connected through care to communities seeking justice through collective solidarity. Through this case we can understand the multiple interrelated scales of healing and

violence that have taken place—from the colonial regime, to the labour of enslavement, violence and death, to the work of healing the body and community by social movements. This case demonstrates the multiple scales of these territorial contestations and actions of the healing collective in grounding responses to these. The politics of place are addressed through examining these different scales at the same time and in the support and social justice opportunities that these organisations create. By healing individual bodies through collective care and struggles against extractivism and other violence, these activist groups operate 'across and through scales' (Haesbaert 2013b) to create their own territories. Here multi-temporal and porous approaches are used to heal and even to proactively 'defend' the body as territory. This work is multi-temporal to defend the body/territory by 'weaving the memory of our grandmothers'. Such practices build on feminist and social justice approaches connecting to and redressing past injustice through facilitating individual and collective healing. As Lorena Cabnal states this process is necessarily relational, 'because by healing you, I heal myself and in my healing, you heal, we all heal'. This case identifies the interconnected processes of situating and grounding the body–territory due to international colonialism and conflict. In doing so, it draws out the heterogeneous sets of actors involved in creating and making territory, at various scales at the same time, connecting the territories of the body, neighbourhood, urban, periphery, and transnational contested territories.

7. Using territories

The contemporary conceptualisation of territory centres on the 'appropriation of space in pursuit of political projects' (Halvorsen 2019, 791). But once space is appropriated as territory, to what uses is it put? In a political economy analysis, the use of territory is central to the production, circulation, and realisation of value, as moments within the process of capital accumulation. In this sense, the struggle in regards to political economy is interwoven with the contestation of territory. This section therefore discusses the role of territory in the process of value creation, expanding accumulation, and social reproduction. Fundamentally, the contribution of this discussion is to show how states, capital, and subaltern groups all attempt to establish rival uses of territory, by creating infrastructure, expanding frontiers, and localising social provisioning.

Political economy approaches to territory often focus on the relationship between nation-states and the globalized economy, and the contradictory territorial logic of capital accumulation. Following the former line of analysis, Dependency Theory addresses Latin America as a specific territory within the global economy, shaped by relations between nation-states, in a similar vein to the Marxist literature which understands imperialism as a struggle for capital accumulation by national ruling classes, organized by state territorial boundaries (Weeks 1981). Within the Dependency Theory literature, Latin America was conceived as having a specific function as part of the 'periphery' of the global capitalist system. Like other peripheral territories, its role was to provide primary products, in exchange for complex manufactures from the industrialised nations at the 'core' of the global economy. Particular forms of capitalist production were thus fixed within specific territories, and the unequal exchange of value between territories shaped the interrelation of 'developed' and 'underdeveloped' countries. This framing has a strong resonance with many of the papers delivered across the Contested Territories workshops, in particular on the topic of 'neo-extractivism' (Gudynas 2009). Critical analyses of neo-extractivism see this process as a 're-primarisation' of Latin American

economies, undoing the industrial transformations that might have lifted them out of the global economic periphery established via colonialism (Burchardt and Dietz 2014). Andrew Jobling (LWS) pushed this analysis further, in examining how the expansion of neo-extractivism in Peru has further imposed a particular vision of modernity and how the territorial politics of neo-extractivism has made rural communities appear out of place in their own regions. Armando Caroca (YWS) approached extractivism from a different direction, examining the social and environmental costs of expanding Chilean mining. Caroca's analysis showed how extractivism in Chile since the Pinochet era territorialises risk, without the redistributive compensations that characterises 'neo'-extractivism by centre-left governments in the region. The global core-periphery territorial hierarchy of unequal value exchange was thus mirrored in the hierarchy between the centralised national power and the Northern region of Atacama that bore uncompensated risks of value creation.

The geographical turn in political economy follows the latter line of analysis. It examines how territorialisation is a necessary part of accumulation, as production must be organized somewhere, but also how this territorial fixity presents a barrier to profitability that must eventually be overcome (Harvey, [1982] 2018). This imparts a sense that the expansion of value must constantly be in motion—and driven to new frontiers by that motion. Hanne Cottyn's contributions (LWS and YWS) capture this sense of motion and challenge the core-periphery territorial hierarchy on which Dependency Theory is based. Cottyn applies Jason W. Moore's (2000) concept of 'commodity frontiers' to the territory of the Andean highlands (see Box 6), showing how capitalism's need to open up new sources of energy leads to the appropriation of lands once held by Indigenous peoples. Our understanding of the use of territory in producing value is therefore bound up in a constant series of dispossession, as the exigencies of capital accumulation contest Indigenous forms of landholding. This analysis pushes the state as a territorial 'container' into the background, foregrounding dynamic recreation of territory in the transnational metabolism between capital and nature in value creation. As Cottyn describes, the commodification of frontier territories is far from routine, but rather a messy, uneven, incomplete process that evokes the Andean term 'soroche' (altitude sickness).

Box 6. Commodity Frontiers, by _Hanne Cottyn, University of York_

Combining insights from world-systems analysis and political ecology, 'commodity frontier' refers to the deeply gendered and racialised processes and sites (frontiers and frontier zones) of appropriation, and often dispossession, of places and people as cheap reserves of nature, work, and energy (Moore 2000). The notion of commodity frontiers forces us to reconsider the historical role of rural territories in capitalism, shifting our focus from the factories of Manchester to the Caribbean sugar plantations as the motor of capitalist expansion.

Over the centuries, the trajectories of old and new commodity frontiers—from sugar and silver to soy and lithium—have transformed Latin America societies, deepened its unequal relation to the global economy, degraded its landscapes, and sparked powerful resistance processes. Studying these frontiers recasts what is often portrayed as a zero-sum incorporation of rural communities into a dialectical and entangled history in which local histories refused to neatly integrate into more global flows. The altiplano—the Andean high plateau covering mainly southern Peru and western Bolivia—illustrates this process. Through its early incorporation as a silver-providing periphery, the altiplano was restructured into a vital frontier zone, both functional and disruptive to the smooth expansion of a

capitalist world order. The rise of the Potosí silver economy was subsidised by the divestment, reorganisation, and re-imagination of rural communities into cheap reserves of labour and natural resources.

In the process, Andean communities did not simply disappear in the face of an imagined omnipotent system nor did they passively persist, but they were reinvented as sites of state and market participation and resistance. This dialectical process has been reproduced—discursively and materially—through cycles of resource extraction (wool, tin, lithium), political and economic reform, and Indigenous struggle. The constant movement of commodity frontiers into new noncommodified spaces (lithium in the salt flats) or reconquering old frontiers (Chinese copper mining) elucidates capitalism's transformative and flexible character, overcoming its social and ecological limits (think of peasant uprisings or environmental grassroots movements, dried-up lakes, or exhausted mineral reserves) through new spatial and technological fixes.

But it is possible to look at value production from the opposite angle, while still basing analysis on the structural logic of capital accumulation. Neil Brenner (1998) introduced the concept of 'territorial organization' to shift the focus from borders to the infrastructure within sovereign states. This shift allows us to question the role states play in supporting and organising value production within their own territories, particularly by shaping the built environment in specific ways. Emma Morales' contribution (SWS) captures how this process works through urbanisation. As Morales observes, the growth of cities drives up land values and the associated taxes for infrastructure provision. This process is then exacerbated by the accretion of high-cost additions to the built environment, such as shopping malls, luxury apartments, and gated communities, which are targeted towards economic elites. State urban planning policy lies behind this process of capital accumulation, squarely directed at supporting increased economic growth instead of the well-being of the poor.

However, the recent turn towards a more plural conceptualisation of territory (e.g., Halvorsen 2019) encourages us to look at how different territorial understandings shape territorial uses. In a political economy framing, this suggests that we should examine how the territorialisation of the economy is shaped as much by cultural and ideational factors as by the drive for accumulation. This opens a discussion of the limitations of much of the Marxian geographical political economy literature on space, scale, and territory—in that it focuses on the structural conditions of capitalist growth and crisis, but omits much discussion of the agency of subaltern actors in resisting capitalist reproduction and constructing alternatives. Territory is shaped by the requirements of capital accumulation, and particularly bound up with the idea of 'sovereign' territories defined by nation-states. However, a shift towards non-state conceptualisations of territory exposes how different understandings of territory shape the capital accumulation process. Several papers explored this relationship. Speaking of Brazil, Patricia Schappo (YWS) outlined how the 'culture of markets' in Belo Horizonte continues to shape processes of economic exchange. As she notes, this occurs despite the emergence of other sites for exchange, such as supermarkets, which means that traditional marketplaces are no longer economically necessary to provision the city. In the case of Mexico City, as outlined by Leon Felipe Tellez (YWS and SWS), public markets are shaped more by the social reproduction needs of low-income traders than by the exigencies of expanding capital accumulation on an increasing scale. As the public markets' network is an outgrowth of the Mexican welfare-state, this forms a powerful example of how states do not only structure their territories according to the requirements of capitalist production. In both cases, public markets are imagined as part of a social heritage which is valued for reasons beyond their contribution to increasing overall

profitability. The logic of expanding capital accumulation is thus contested by a social understanding of the territorialisation of economic provisioning.

While the contributions mentioned above focus on the circulation of capital in the realisation of value, we can also examine how the circulation of people shapes the relationship between territory and economy. Itzel San Roman's paper (YWS) focused on community-based tourism (CBT) on the Yucatan Peninsula. Through describing three communities—one Indigenous, one rural, one coastal—Pineda explored how CBT shifted from an international development initiative to a grassroots movement. CBT began as a policy framework of the World Tourism Organization, administered by the Mexican state with the goal of relieving territorial inequalities via local development projects. However, the implementation process had the unintended consequence of turning a state-led public policy into a grassroots initiative. Through this transformation, CBT in the Yucatan showed how territory could be structured by principles of the 'social and solidarity economy' (Utting 2015), as opposed to the global neoliberal project administered nationally by the Mexican state. The need to grasp territory within a solidarity economy framework is well acknowledged (Gajac and Pelek 2019) and San Roman's work contributes to this recent direction. The concept of social and solidarity economy has existed in various forms for over two centuries, but its recent use in Latin America arises out of discussions around the World Social Forums. In essence, social and solidarity economy constitutes a Polanyian 'countermovement' (Polanyi 1944) against the structuring of territory and society by market imperatives, by organizing economic life around cooperatives, mutual societies, and other non-capitalist associations which would 'embed' market activity in social institutions (Laville 2015). Rather than internalising the logic of competition promoted by the World Tourism Organization and the Mexican state, the Yucatan communities opted to structure their enterprises around equal prices, shared training costs, and communal upkeep of common resources. As San Roman relates, the CBTs have become a site where the meaning of 'community' is contested. On one hand, external actors, including businesses, view the role of the community as that of bearing the burden of maintaining the local environment while ensuring profit growth. Conversely, the local communities view CBTs as a means of controlling growth based on environmental needs and establishing limits to the influence of extra-territorial business interests.

The discussion of alternatives to the continued (re)territorialisation of capital leads us to consider how alternate visions of territorial use are rooted in categories of labour. This theme has been particularly visible in visions of economic life that draw on Indigenous thought, such as Buen Vivir (Acosta 2013). In parallel, the study of rural workers (Fernandes 2012) and of repeasantisation (Van der Ploeg 2009) leads us to consider how rural labour may control and organise territory based on a different logic of economic provisioning. Nathan Einbinder's (YWS) outlined how Indigenous peoples within the Maya-Achí territory of Guatemala had articulated an alternative form of economic provisioning against state-directed capitalist development. In the context of Latin America's turn towards agribusiness, Indigenous organizations have combined traditional farming practices with newer sustainability techniques, organised around the concept of Utziil K'asleem—an Indigenous understanding of well-being which is distinct from a narrow focus on economic growth. In a similar vein, Kyla Sankey's paper (YWS) problematised the relationship between emerging peasant movements and economic autonomy. Sankey emphasised how economic autonomy cannot be read from peasant's class status, but must be constructed politically, in a critique of neoliberalism as much as a conquest of territory. Overall, the theme of *using territories* captures the multi-sided struggle between states, capital, and subaltern actors in the attempt to ground value creation either with a view to accumulation or social provisioning based on non-capitalist priorities.

8. Governing territories

The fifth component of our typology revolves around the struggles and alternatives that underlie and shape the governance of territories. Throughout the different workshops, the centrality of institutional systems and decision-, policy-, and law-making processes became critical when reflecting on power relations in contested territories. In different case studies, participants discussed the importance that governance issues have for multiple socio-territorial actors. In this section, we explore regulatory and institutional issues through two main questions: 1) What is the significance of institutional design and law-, policy-, and decision-making processes in territorial contestation? and 2) How does alternative grassroots governance challenge neoliberal territorial governance? Discussing these questions picks apart the conceptual and practical salience of territorial governance. Therefore, we examine the complexities of the nexus territories-regulations-institutions by investigating antagonisms that characterise relationships between states and socio-territorial movements.

The main contribution of the analysis is to outline a political arena in which at least three crucial contemporary socio-territorial processes come into play. These processes are: 1) the reproduction of neo-liberal and colonial-modern states and their capacity to facilitate capital accumulation and exploitation; 2) the creation and implementation of participatory mechanisms for law, policy, and decision making regarding the control and use of territories; and 3) the possibility of building post-neoliberal and decolonised legal and institutional arrangements. As multiple case studies illustrate, these processes converge in many Latin American contexts, where conflicts around governance issues make visible the entrenched coloniality and neo-liberal principles that guide state action.[13] The importance that these issues have for both dominant and subaltern actors is undeniable. This section highlights the need to carefully consider territorial governance in order to build a more holistic, inter-scalar, and interdisciplinary approach to territories in contestation. Ultimately, we argue that territorial governance emerges as a focal point through which power relations and social divides are perpetuated or transformed, and as a pivotal domain in the politics of contemporary territorial contestation.

Workshop contributors adopted a multi-stakeholder approach coinciding with the critical examination of traditional conceptualisations of territory and governance (Elden 2013, 2007; Shin 2015). This approach views the state as one among multiple actors involved in shaping the material and symbolic features of territories. The participants emphasised the political and contested nature of the regulatory and institutional frameworks that govern these territories. They thus acknowledged the diversity of actors and interests that come together around legislative and institutional agendas. Following this focus on diversity and conflict, our discussion reflects further on a series of questions about how governance and territorial issues intersect. Among those questions we considered: Who produces institutional and regulatory frameworks? What economic, political, cultural, or environmental principles guide their creation? What type of territories do these principles produce, strengthen, prohibit, or destroy? How does territorial contestation impact institutional and regulatory processes? Who benefits from these rules, institutions, procedures, and territorial configurations? Who is disadvantaged and how?

To further explore these, as well as our overarching questions, and to better illustrate the three processes at stake, we have selected a few workshop contributions to highlight the predominance of governance issues in territorial contestation. First, following Felipe

Irarrazaval's and Francesca Ferlicca's case studies (see also Box 7), we focus on the neo-liberal state, its territorial governance, and the legal and institutional outcomes that territorial contestation produces. Second, following the work of Marie-Sophie Heinelt and Valesca Lima, and Sarah Radcliffe and Isabella Radhuber, we introduce the critique of prevailing participatory mechanisms, and the struggles to build post-neoliberal and decolonised legal and institutional frameworks in Latin America.

The issue of neo-liberal governance has been part of political and academic discussions for several decades now and its principles, institutions, procedures, and rules have transformed the governance of territories across the world. In Latin America, neo-liberal governance has been linked to Washington Consensus policies, which have permeated the agendas of both right and left-wing governments since the 1980s (Grugel and Riggirozzi 2009). Although left-wing administrations have resisted neoliberalisation to some extent (Icaza 2010), more recent critiques reveal the persistence of neoliberal governance in Latin America. For example, by shaping the state's functions through discourses and practices of neo-developmentalism (Gezmis 2018; Postero and Fabricant 2019).[14] These neoliberal views influence territorial governance by creating laws, policies, and institutions aimed at controlling and exploiting multiple territories and their resources.

As Irarrazaval shows (YWS, see also Irarrazaval 2020), these processes are challenged by local communities that place governance issues at the heart of territorial contestation. Focusing on sub-national conflicts around natural gas extraction, Irarrazaval illustrates the centrality of institutional change for Indigenous communities in Erachati, Peru, and Tarija, Bolivia. This work reveals how communities have contested prevailing forms of neoliberal governance that facilitate the activities of extractive industries. In this context, territorial contestation transforms institutional structures and their jurisdictional powers in order to confront the unequal distribution of natural gas rents. As Irarrazabal notes, these struggles led to the secession of Megantoni from Echarati in Peru and the emergence of the Region Autónoma del Chaco in Bolivia. These institutional conflicts therefore also changed the form and identity of territories. These alternative institutional arrangements, based on pre-existing territorial identities and demands of autonomy, have been crucial for Indigenous movements to resist state- and capital-led territorialisation processes.

Regulatory frameworks are another central element in territorial contestation, as grassroots alternatives to neoliberal governance can be prefigured in laws and policies. Both law and policy making can be crucial to consolidate the rights that social movements need to more effectively protect the livelihoods of marginal and vulnerable communities. By the tactical navigation of law-making institutions and mechanisms, grassroots organisations bring territorial contestation into more bureaucratic domains. There, they can fight for decades to reform crucial aspects of existing legal frameworks. This is the case of the Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat (Law for Fair Access to Habitat) in Buenos Aires, Argentina, whose enactment, Francesca Ferlicca (SWS) tells us, is the result of long-term struggles to change urban law. This reform illustrates the meaningful results that socio-territorial movements can achieve when fighting for legal certainties around land ownership and infrastructure provision. As Ferlicca highlights, transforming this complex politico-regulatory arena involves both the construction of more socially just and democratic territories and disputing the neoliberal principles on which state institutions operate.

Box 7. Governing contested territories in Buenos Aires Province: The case of the Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat, by *Francesca Ferlicca, University of Venice*

According to the National Registry of Popular Neighbourhoods (RENABAP), there are 4,416 popular neighbourhoods in Argentina, of which 1,709 are in the province of Buenos Aires. Techo (2017) reports that the housing deficit affects more than 3.5 million people; a problem that has aggravated because, the functioning of land property has historically been delegated to the market in Argentina. The lack of land supply for the popular classes and the existence of large areas without adequate infrastructure have encouraged illegal speculative processes that, in turn, foster informal access to land. Moreover, given that 'popular' urbanisation and 'irregular' urbanisation are considered synonyms in existing regulatory frameworks and that construction standards are based only on formal residential spaces, access to housing and legal certainty are extremely difficult to obtain for low-income people.

This long-standing situation draws our attention to the struggles to develop new territorial governance mechanisms such as the Buenos Aires Provincial Law 14.449/2003 (also known as 'Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat'). Looking into this experience sheds light on the creation of grassroots alternatives through territorial contestation, as this law was eventually incorporated into the urban planning system of the municipalities of Buenos Aires Province. This was possible because the 'Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat' was the result of democratic struggles and coordination strategies between social organisations, political actors, government officials, and academics. Put in its historical context, this law represents a turning point in the production of urban legal instruments and an alternative to the previous Military Junta's Decree-Law 8912/1977.

The 'Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat' seeks to allocate urban land for low-income housing, facilitate the regularisation of informal neighbourhoods, address the diversity and complexity of urban housing demand, and generate new resources by preventing real estate speculation. A crucial development of this law is that it introduces a new vision regarding the regulation of the urban land market. This vision led to the creation and systematisation of a series of territorial management tools that allow municipalities to regulate the diversity of urban actors and improve their infrastructure conditions. For instance, the 'Programa de Lotes con Servicios' works as an urban intervention project that facilitates the provision of and access to infrastructure and services both in already existing and new plots. Furthermore, the Programme for the Subdivision and Generation of Urban Land allows municipalities to allocate plots to lower-income groups. Although their reach is limited, these programmes have been implemented and not only ignored (DPAJH 2017; CELS 2017).

The set of policies proposed in the law undoubtedly widen the possibilities of low-income people to access serviced urban land and housing. However, they now seem unable to respond to increasing housing demand in Argentina, which has worsened in light of the economic crisis unleashed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite its benefits, the adoption and implementation of the 'Ley de Acceso Justo al Hábitat' is not mandatory for municipalities and, therefore, its capacity to tackle and solve the housing deficit has been extremely limited. In the face of this situation, resolving the housing problem remains in the hands of collective action and territorial contestation, through which the popular sectors occupy land and reclaim their right to land and life, notwithstanding the fact that local governments criminalise them.

Ferlicca's example signals two more central issues concerning territorial governance: the critique of participatory governance and the possibilities of creating post-neoliberal and decolonised institutional and regulatory frameworks. On the one hand, contributors Heinelt and Lima (SWS) see also Heinelt 2019, 2015; Lima 2019) identified the deep-seated limitations of participatory governance of public-private renewable energy projects in Brazil and Chile. Looking critically into the limitations of neo-liberal models of participatory planning and consultation, their work foregrounds the centrality of territorial contestation in ongoing discussions about how and to what extent participatory mechanisms in Latin America address grassroots understandings of justice, democracy, and well-being (Benton 2016; Schilling and Flemmer 2015; Basurto 2013; Koonings 2004).

We emphasise this critique because the struggles of Indigenous and peasant movements against deceptive and anti-democratic participatory structures also prefigure the emergence of decolonised post-neoliberal territorial governance. Radcliffe and Radhuber's contribution (LWS) specifically explored a persistent concern about fostering territorial autonomy, Indigenous land rights, and the rights of nature in Latin America. They view these as avenues for dismantling neo-liberal and colonial-modern governance regimes.[15] This post-colonial and post-neoliberal agenda stresses the importance of grassroots struggles in law- and policy-making arenas, particularly in pluri-national states, as the reform of national constitutions opens new possibilities for the recognition of the plurality of sovereignties and territorial governance regimes that co-exist in countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia. As Radcliffe (2018, 2012) and Radhuber (2015) have argued elsewhere, these legislative struggles become critical arenas to achieve, undermine, or distort the social and political aspirations of historically marginalised groups as condensed, for example, in Sumak Kawsay. Inasmuch as these struggles mainly revolve around territorial governance, these legal and institutional arenas will remain a focal point for socio-territorial movements. Therefore, they remain key to achieving a comprehensive understanding of territorial contestation.

9. Conclusion

Experiences from Latin America suggest that territory is 'constructed on a broad continuum between hegemonic domination and subaltern appropriation and resistance between a power with greater functional and/ or repressive force and a more symbolic and/ or autonomist power' (Haesbaert and Mason-Deese 2020, 263). Moving beyond more narrow Anglophone conceptualisations, Latin American approaches broaden the notion of territory, highlighting its conflict-ridden and power-laden nature, and relating it to diverse scales, actors, ideas, and practices. In examining the specificity of contested territorial theories, practices, and methods, this paper puts forth a distinctive contribution, arguing that there is a significant variance in types of territorial tactics and approaches across communities, activists, and scholarship situated in Latin America. Building on this insight we propose a typology of territorial contestations, in which we identify six distinctive 'types' of contested territories. While this is not exhaustive, we use this typology to identify divergence and ensure that different dimensions of territorial contestation come to light, alongside those that are more dominant in the emerging literature, such as territorial accumulation.

We developed this typology through drawing on how scholars and activists from Latin America and beyond have mobilised the notion of contested territories to make sense of distinct

phenomena. Building on these different contributions from interdisciplinary workshops on contested territories, as well as a wide range of literature on this topic, we identified six different themes: imagining, fighting, delimiting, situating, using, and governing territories. While sharing a grounding in Latin American perspectives towards territory, work under each theme addresses different questions and focuses on distinct territorial struggles (see Tables 1 and 2). By establishing this typology, we seek to improve analytical clarity and nuance as well as understandings of the multi-dimensional and multi-thematic nature of contested territories. We argue that further work should take into account these variations when addressing themes related to contested territories. Reflecting on the insights generated in each thematic section, below we outline avenues for future research that engages with the different themes of our typology on territories of contestation in more detail. We hope this is useful for researchers and activists working on topics related to those discussed in this paper.

In section 3 on *Imagining territories*, we reflected on territories as 'the place where culture is constructed, and intersubjectivities and visions of the world are produced and reproduced, where the social relations and possibilities for the future are developed, and as a result, where concrete examples of autonomy are realised' (Ceceña 2004, 12 in Clare et al. 2018, 310). The section centred the notion of 'coloniality' and, following Quijano, highlighted the central role of knowledge in perpetuating the legacy of colonialism. From this perspective, we discussed epistemic decolonisation—or de-linking from Western knowledge systems—as a necessary step for imagining emancipatory territorial formations across and beyond Latin America. We outlined four strategies for constructing territorial knowledge otherwise. The first is foregrounding situated, bodily, and affective ways of knowing, as opposed to traditional Western universalism. The second is 'researching back' (Tuhiwai-Smith 2012): to reveal and amplify oppressed knowledge systems. The third theme is 'prefiguration', and focuses on practices of territorial construction that materialise other ways of being and acting in the world. The fourth is the development of epistemological and methodological tools for collective counter-visioning, as a means for supporting new imaginations of the future. In different ways, each of these knowledge strategies strives to link to non-western scientific and cultural histories, practices, and expertise in order to imagine plural ways of being and becoming that are grounded in more diverse understandings of territories. Overall this discussion highlighted the persistent need to conduct research that fosters epistemic justice and supports grassroots claims to existence and territorial self-determination. Such research can be put into practice first and foremost by radically expanding the opportunities for Indigenous peoples, members of Afro-descendant communities, and grassroots groups to control the production and dissemination of knowledge that concerns them. Secondly, research for epistemic justice needs to value a plurality of ontologies and epistemologies, and make space for the cultural practices and scientific traditions that have been historically suffocated by the hegemony of Western world-views.

In section 4 on *fighting over territories*, four themes were identified which were particularly relevant to issues around territory in conflict and post-conflict contexts. Firstly, the process of leveraging territory in peacebuilding was explored with particular reference to the idea of territorial peace, developed as part of the 2016 Colombian peace agreement between the FARC and the government, as a means of transcending standardised approaches to peacebuilding through a decentralised, redistributive, and participatory set of processes. Despite critiques of this approach, its centring of territorial issues in both conflict and peace remains significant, alongside its (potentially) pluralist understanding of territory. Secondly, and related to this, the recognition of multiple territorial ontologies resonates with the local turn in peace and conflict studies, which prioritises local conceptions of peace. This is highlighted

by the mobilisation of territory in post-conflict contexts by different groups, seen in situated understandings of peace from Guatemala and Colombia. Thirdly, the section highlighted the need to go beyond orthodox understandings of conflict contexts, and look across rural and urban settings. While rural areas are often associated with conflict and territorial processes, urban areas and populations experience divergent iterations of these issues, and formulate distinctive responses, as seen in Colombia and Brazil. Fourthly, and related to this, is the need to go beyond what are normally considered to be 'conflict settings' and examine the significance of territory in non-conflict, violent settings. This is particularly urgent in places such as Mexico and Brazil where extremely high levels of violence occur outside of civil conflict. Together, these issues encourage a wider view of territorial conflict which takes into account a diversity of settings and situations, which may fall outside of narrow disciplinary confines, suggesting the need for a transdisciplinary approach underpinning a pluralist research agenda. Such an agenda would pay particular attention to the specific contextual factors in which struggles over territory emerge, but also trace these struggles' effects beyond their immediate context, while preserving the centrality of territorial questions.

Section 5 on *delimiting territories* highlighted the colonial, power-laden, and conflictive nature associated with the establishment of borders—a process that often occurs on lands already inhabited by Indigenous peoples who hold a distinct relationship to territory. The section argued that the method of counter-cartography represents a useful tool to challenge and confront externally imposed territorial borders and to make visible alternative territorial realities, with or without borders. In a context of on-going urban growth, the expansion of extractive frontiers and associated processes of dispossession, expropriation, and displacement, such methods remain essential to document and support territorial struggles by affected communities and socio-territorial movements. The section also analysed borders as privileged sites to investigate territorial reconfiguration. To do this, it is best to move beyond bounded understandings of territory as associated with a specific setting (e.g., the city) to more process-oriented conceptualisations (e.g., concentrated, extended, and differential urbanisation). More attention also needs to be paid to the informal and formal governance arrangements that contribute to different processes of territorial restructuring, such as urban-to-rural transitions or the expansion/decline of national territories. Finally, discussions on delimiting territories should not only focus on borders or frontier regions, but must also examine bordering processes—implemented both by the state and ordinary people—that increasingly create tensions within Latin American territories.

Section 6 focused on *situating territories*, examining relational power used to remake and reproduce entangled, porous, and processual territorial arrangements, across and through scales. As such multi-scalar and multi-territorial territories operate 'between [...] state-led action and personal agency, between politicized and quotidian identities, between "there" and "here," and between past and present' (Merino et al. 2020, 205). We foregrounded a multi-territorial multi-scalar approach to examining these overlapping territorial practices, relationships, and encounters across different scales at the same time, such as through the body, neighbourhood, and the urban. In particular, to examine these multi-territorial relationships, we focused on the nexus of the body–territory as a site for feminist and Indigenous resistance and activism across Latin America. Contested territorial organising through the body–territory has been critical in reclaiming, drawing attention to, and examining the ongoing violence of territorial processes such as extractivism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism. Continued attention should be paid to uncovering these persistent embodied violence in scholarship examining territorial approaches.

In section 7 we explored how territory forms part of the process of production, circulation, and realization of value and the reproduction of social relations. Rather than seeing capitalism as a single economic process encompassing the entire world, territorial analysis exposes the contestation between uses of territory in support of accumulation versus uses which subordinate economic activity to social provisioning. Within this contestation, we identified the often central role of the state in supporting new territorial uses, both by extending frontiers of accumulation and creating infrastructure. Examining the territorialization of value production by extractive industries in the Andean countries, we saw that accumulation creates territorial hierarchies through an unequal distribution of profits versus risk. But we also observed that capital does not have the power to effortlessly expand its frontiers, often instead succumbing to soroche (dizziness) as it pushes to new heights. The limits to capital accumulation exposed by the case studies opened a conversation about the rival uses of territory as central to social reproduction. Accounts of subaltern, peasant, and indigenous projects emphasised how a social understanding of particular territories shaped patterns of solidarity economy. Overall, this section emphasised the need for constant struggle over the economic provisioning needed to establish non-capitalist forms of territory in the face of expanding frontiers of accumulation. The case studies emphasised that this re-embedding of social priorities into the economic use of territory would not happen automatically. Rather, labour-centric territorialization of the economy requires intentional projects, such as repeasantization and Utziil K'asleem. This conflict between accumulation as value in motion and social provisioning by territorializing heterogeneous forms of labour should be central to future discussions on the uses of territory.

In Section 8, we focused on the nexus contested territories-regulations-institutions to highlight the centrality of territorial governance issues for Indigenous, peasant, and urban socio-territorial movements. We argued that institutional arrangements and law-, policy-, and decision-making processes are central components of territorial contestation and some of its most conflictive arenas. In this sense, territorial contestation unfolds around regulatory and institutional frameworks that shape the relationship between subaltern communities, states, private actors, and the territories themselves. Such frameworks translate competing agendas concerning the representation, appropriation, and use of distinctive, but also changing, territories. As structures operating at different scales, from the global to the local, these institutional and regulatory arrangements have become essential to command oppressive, exploitative, and extractive forms of territorialisation, and dismantling them and prefiguring alternative socio-territorial assemblages have become a pivotal political domain. The examples presented in this section revealed the complexity of these arrangements and struggles, drawing our attention towards the need for more pluralistic and radical approaches to territorial governance, beyond the bounds of neo-liberal and colonial continuities. Moreover, their emphasis on the factors undermining the implementation of post-neoliberal and post-colonial governance projects opens theoretical and practical questions concerning: 1) how multiple territorial ontologies come to shape laws, policies, decision-making mechanisms, and institutional designs, and 2) how, in turn, they contribute to creating socially and environmentally just territories. Further research is required into how the decolonisation of profoundly (neo)liberal and still colonial legal and institutional orderings is actually achieved, by whom, and to what extent.

Table 2. Conceptual openings and future research on territories in contestation

Theme	Conceptual openings	Topics for future research
Imagining territories	• Power-knowledge • Epistemic decolonisation • Emancipatory knowledge practices	• Ongoing need for collaborative research on epistemic justice • The pluriverse in practice
Fighting over territories	• Territorial peace • Overlapping territories • Territorial ontologies	• Conflict in urban/peri-urban territories • Role of territory in non-conflict/ violent settings
Delimiting territories	• Bordering • Planetary urbanisation • Overlapping territories	• How governance arrangements shape territorial overlaps • Everyday border control and policing within territories
Situating territories	• Relational territories • Inter scalar territorial action such as the body-territory	• Violence of how territory is contested and reproduced at different and interconnected scales • Racialised and gendered implications of body-territory nexus
Using territories	• Territorial organisation of value production • Territorialisation of solidarity economy • Neo-extractive relations within and between territories	• Territorialisation of value creation and social reproduction by labour • Commodity frontiers and how they are contested
Governing territories	• Territorial governance • Legal pluralism • Participatory planning	• Decolonisation of legal and institutional arrangements • Implementation of post-neoliberal and post-colonial governance regimes

Elaborated by the authors

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[2] All authors contributed equally to the writing of this working paper.

[3] These authors were invited to write case study boxes (see sections 3-8).

[4] According to Grugel and Fontana (2019, 708), the 'pink tide' refers to a "sudden and widespread rise" of "leftist (but not communist)" political movements who took control of national government in different Latin American countries in the first decade of the 21st century, including Venezuela (1998), Brazil (2002), Argentina (2003), Uruguay (2004), Bolivia (2003), Nicaragua (2007).

[5] More detailed summaries of the three workshops are available here: Workshop 1: http://www.contested-territories.net/1st-international-workshop-on-contested-territories/; Workshop 2: http://www.contested-territories.net/resumen-del-segundo-taller-internacional-la-economía-política-de-territorios-en-disputa/; Workshop 3: http://www.contested-territories.net/summary-and-keynote-video-of-the-3rd-international-workshop-alternatives-to-development-within-contested-territories/

[6] LWS, YWS and SWS will be used to identify the workshop in which the addressed participant presented a paper.

[7] https://www.contested-territories.net/

[8] The *grupo modernidad/colonialidad* is a network of critical thinkers who, since the late 1990s/early 2000, have worked on the notion of modernity/coloniality and developed propositions for decolonisation. The network includes, among many others, Aníbal Quijano, Ramón Grosfoguel, Maria Lugones, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Walter Mignolo, Sylvia Wynter, and Catherine Walsh.

[9] *Buen Vivir* is broadly understood as a set of ideas and practices originating from Andean communities that derive from a critique of development and draw on situated understandings of issues, particularly regarding the relationship between communities and their environment, and the rejection of materialism. It is a plural concept which is interpreted differently in diverse settings, allowing links between different cultural and ontological understandings, but potentially adding to definitional difficulties (Gudynas 2011), including in the Colombian context (see section 4).

[10] Interview with FARC ex-combatant, August 2018.

[11] The term 'hostile environment' originally emerged in the UK context in 2012 and is associated with policy interventions by former Conservative Home Secretary Theresa May which include measures to limit access to work, housing, and health care for asylum seekers and migrants as well as to rely on citizen-led immigration checks. A similar approach has been applied by consecutive Conservative governments in the UK, see also https://www.freemovement.org.uk/briefing-what-is-the-hostile-environment-where-does-it-come-from-who-does-it-affect/.

[12] Interview with Peace Brigades International, available to view at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1y5GX66sbbg

[13] Coloniality and neoliberalism are not antithetical but interwoven structures that sustain multiple forms of oppression, discrimination, and exploitation. Building on the postcolonial critique, Anthias (2018, 10-11) highlights the need to locate neoliberal territorial governance 'within a longer story of colonial governmentality and ethnic spatial fixes' that speaks of the 'persistence of colonial knowledge-power inequalities' in neoliberal regimes. These 'colonial-modern legacies of knowledge production and

governance' (Radcliffe 2018, 417) are not only deeply racist, centralising, and exclusionary, but essential 'to reify a modern, colonial version of territorial sovereignty [and] de-legitimise alternative visions of territory, governance and development' (Laing 2020, 29), particularly those of Indigenous peoples.

[14] The emergence of post-neoliberalism in Latin America with the rise of the New Left has not involved the refusal or eradication of neoliberalism in the region. Rather, as Gezmis argues (2018, 69), we have witnessed the consolidation of neo-developmentalism, which 'depart[ing] from some elements of [the] old developmentalism [has] accommodated itself to the neoliberal view of the importance of private entrepreneurship and markets as engines of growth.' For Postero and Fabricant (2019, 101), this neo-developmentalism has led to a situation in which countries such as Bolivia, which has relentlessly advanced a politically progressive agenda since the early 2000s, are today 'far from a post-neoliberal or post-capitalist reality,' as they continue to rely 'upon extractive industries and transnational agribusiness as the core strategies for national economic development.'

[15] As a project to root out coloniality and neoliberalism, alternative territorial governance aims, primarily, at 'overturning the exclusion of subaltern knowledges (Millán, 2014), and de-linking policy from colonial-modern depoliticised, technical fixes (Roth, 2013)' (Radcliffe 2018, 430). Rather than fully realised projects, such governance regimes are the product of ongoing struggles, primarily between grassroots movements and states, as in the case of TIOCS in Bolivia (Laing 2020; Postero and Fabricant 2019), Zapatista autonomous municipalities in Mexico (Melenotte 2015), and quilombolal territories in Brazil (Gomes Soares et al. 2019).