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Federalism and the Concept of Political Territoriality

Towards an Analytical Framework for Comparative Territorial Politics

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Introduction

Territory as a variable of scholarly interest is on the rise again. The integration process of nation-states into the European Union (EU), three centuries after their “*mystical*” birth in the Westphalia region,¹ questions the hitherto dominant “*disciplinary nationalism*” of political science.² As much as the nation-state had both absorbed lower-level polities and rendered higher entities—the Holy Roman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Kingdom, three socialist federations etc.—superfluous, so the main task of analysts was perceived to be to focus on the political system at the ‘national’ level. So persistent was this obsession with that level of government that even federal studies, by definition the most concerned with sub-national autonomy and its individual or collective interplay with the higher level, rarely opted for any other than a top-down perspective and cross-national comparisons. It is only in the 1960s that a “*View from the States*” is proposed.³ No wonder, then, that this branch of political science has had to catch up more than any other sub-field, while at the same time fight off the intrusion of related

1. Jeremy Larkins, *From hierarchy to anarchy: territory and politics before Westphalia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

2. Michael Keating, “Thirty Years of Territorial Politics,” *West European Politics*, 31:1 (2008): 60–81.

3. Daniel J. Elazar, *American Federalism: A view from the States* (New York: Crowell, 1966).

but distinct research traditions. The goal of the second section of this paper is to show the complementarity of different approaches to the same overall question: what is the role of territory for politics? The term ‘comparative territorial politics’ is proposed to include all scholarship that touches upon that question in a particular way: by explicitly using territory as an intervening variable. Federalists have got company.

Apart from EU integration, the parallel developments of regionalization (e.g. in Italy), decentralisation (France), devolution (United Kingdom) and federalisation (Belgium, Spain), over at least the last 40 years, have been no less dramatic. As is to be expected from empirically oriented research, these developments have sparked several avenues in political science: the travelling of concepts and theories developed at the national level ‘down’ to the regional level; the ‘horizontal’ comparison of regional political systems within the same or across different nation-states; the enquiry into a possible causal link between processes of regionalization and Europeanization; the development of new typologies to replace the no longer valid dichotomy of unitary and federal states; or the role of political parties as both the effect and the cause of such ‘multilevel’ developments. Federal studies have given away their ‘natural’ advantage in studying such questions too easily, at the expense of more dynamically evolving fields such as comparative government, party politics, election studies, political behaviour or ‘Europeanization’ studies. But as much as scholarship from these sub-fields contributes to their respective body of knowledge, thinking in overlapping circles (or ‘fuzzy sets’) does more: it serves to integrate them into the field of comparative territorial politics (where the circles overlap) and enhances the overall conceptual clarity and usefulness. The core concept I wish to present, in the third section of this paper, is ‘political territoriality.’ It is a syncretic notion with roots in human geography that subsumes several of the assumptions made by the different research perspectives on territorial politics. Its modest purpose is that of an ‘attention-directing device’: a heuristic tool that can guide a systematic enquiry into territorial politics.⁴

Comparative Territorial Politics: A Federal Discipline?

Comparative territorial politics, as a discipline, combines three concerns. It is comparative in its method, political in its objects, and territorial in its focus. Its goal is to study either the territorial attributes of politics, e.g. the causes and effects of devolution,⁵ or the political attributes of territories, e.g. the distinc-

4. Johan P. Olsen, “The Many Faces of Europeanization,” *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002): 943.

5. Vernon Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)

tiveness of regional identities.⁶ Its method is to compare over time and/or space because territory, by definition, is physically limited and meaningful only if put in context (see below). This section shows why federal and regional studies, Multilevel Governance (MLG) and EU studies, and also local government research form the core of this discipline. It also discusses why and how contributions from other sub-fields of political science can be considered a part of that discipline, too.

The core...

Our starting point is the political system⁷ as summarising the rules, resources, actors and processes of society that together govern the creation, implementation and adjudication of collectively binding rules. Territory is not an explicit element of this definition. But any set of rules, operative range of actors, or implementation of a certain policy is spatially bounded. For systems at the nation-state level, this happens through a definition of the state,⁸ by necessity (lack of resources, contested territories, occupation, civil war etc.), or—most often—through mutual agreement of nation-states recognising their respective sovereignty. But political systems exist also at other levels than just the nation-state.

Any political system is “*distinguished by the fact that its rules specify the areas of jurisdiction for other decision-making-units and provide methods for settling conflicts of jurisdiction. It is hierarchical in character and territorial in domain.*”⁹ Decision-making and settling conflicts necessitate an ‘umpire’, not in the judicial but in the political sense: who governs for whom and how? Hix¹⁰ applied the idea of a political system to the EU, emphasising its institutional design, direct and aggregated citizen inputs, policy impact and the interaction (‘feedback’) between these political outputs, new demands on the system, new decisions and so on. But the principle of thinking in terms of ‘stratarchical’¹¹ political systems can be taken even further.

If there really *is* a core to the study of politics, I believe it is with describing and explaining political power understood in the Weberian, socio-relational

6. Klaus Detterbeck and Eve Hepburn, “Party Politics in Multi-level Systems: party responses to new challenges in European democracies,” in *New Directions in Federalism Studies*, ed. Jan Erk and Wilfried Swenden, (London and NY: Routledge, 2010).

7. Gabriel Almond, “Comparative Political System,” *The Journal of Politics* 18:3 (1956): 391–409. David Easton, *The Political System. An Inquiry into the State of Political Science* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc, 9th edition, 1968 [1953]).

8. Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun, 1992 [1919]).

9. Morton A Kaplan, *System and Process in International Politics*. (UK: ECPR Press, University of Essex in Colchester, 2005 [1957]), 28.

10. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union*. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition, 2005), 2.

11. R. Kenneth Carty, “Parties as Franchise Systems: The Stratarchical Organizational Imperative,” *Party Politics* 10, (2004): 5–24.

sense. As a corollary, describing and explaining the territorial dimension of politics follows the same principles for political systems at *any* scale. Whether it is about the influence of the local periphery at the national centre,¹² local autonomy from regional interference (confusingly labelled ‘state-local relations’ in the US),¹³ or yet again the position of nation-states within the EU—the systemic properties of institutional design, input, output and interaction remain the same. The only difference at the core of comparative territorial politics is the primary object of interest: local, regional, provincial, state, national or European.

However, there is yet no scholarly consensus on whether federal studies constitute a part of territorial politics or the other way round. The hierarchy is far from clear also for ‘federalism’ and ‘federal studies’—is the first the ideological dimension and the second the empirical investigation, as King argued?¹⁴ Or are ‘federalism’ and ‘federation’ the same?¹⁵ And what about ‘federal government’¹⁶, ‘federal political systems’¹⁷ and ‘federality’?¹⁸ For the sake of both clarity and brevity, I follow Watt’s¹⁹ threefold distinction between ‘federalism’ as a normative term, ‘federal political system’ as the genus and ‘federations’ as a specific type of this genus. Federal studies are then that branch of political science concerned with the “*origins, operation and significance*”²⁰ of federalism, federal political systems and/or federations.

Returning to ‘territorial politics’, we encounter a similar problem. Any political ‘phenomenon’ meaningfully related to territory (e.g. the veto-power of French prefects, second-order elections in the UK, federal reform in Germany) fits the category of territorial politics as a common-sense descriptor.²¹ But territorial politics also denotes that branch of political science *studying* these processes. As disci-

12. Sidney Tarrow, “Local Constraints on Regional Reform: A Comparison of Italy and France.” *Comparative Politics* 7 (1979): 1-36.

13. Ann O’M Bowman and Richard C. Kearney. “Second-Order Devolution: Data and Doubt,” *Publius* 41:4, (2011): 563–585.

14. Preston King, *Federalism and Federation* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

15. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

William Riker, “Six Books in Search of a Subject or Does Federalism Exist and Does it Matter?” *Comparative Politics* 2:1 (1969): 135–46.

16. Kenneth C Wheare, *Federal Government* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963).

17. Ronald L. Watts, “Federalism, Federal Political Systems, and Federations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:1 (1998): 117–137.

Ronald L Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 3rd edition, 2008).

18. Henry Sidgwick, cit. in Michael Burgess, *Comparative Federalism: Theory and Practice*. (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 21.

19. Ronald L. Watts, “Federalism, Federal Political Systems, and Federations,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 1:1 (1998): 117–137.

20. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*. (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

21. Michael Keating, “Thirty Years of Territorial Politics,” *West European Politics* 31:1 (2008): 60–81.

pline, it is the name given to studies of ‘federal political systems’,²² which however avoid the term ‘federalism’—but not its substance, which is territoriality. Clearly the meaning ascribed to these terms depends on context. If ‘territorial politics’ stands for ‘general’ studies of ‘the territorial dimension of politics’,²³ then there is hardly any difference to federal studies. But if territorial politics summarises, for example, decentralisation of power in formerly unitary states like France,²⁴ the UK²⁵ or Italy,²⁶ then observable phenomena are referred to. To distinguish more clearly, I call ‘comparative territorial politics’ the discipline, and territorial politics the group of phenomena under analytic scrutiny.

What, then, is the connection with regional studies? Three opinions exist. For ‘classic’ federalists such as Wheare,²⁷ Elazar,²⁸ Friedrich,²⁹ and Riker,³⁰ regions are simply—and only—coterminous with the constituent entities of a federal state. Riker speaks of “*regional governments*”³¹ as opposed to “*the central government*”—regional studies would then be focusing on just one side of the federal principle. Accordingly, all regional studies are also federal studies—but not all federal studies are regional studies, because there is more to federal inquiry than the regional governments and their relation to the ‘centre’. Regional studies as a separate line of inquiry lose their justification, at worst, and confine federal studies to a bottom-up perspective, at best.

For a second set of territorial politics scholars, regional governments are present in nonfederal states as well. While not denying the regional character of constituent units in a federation, regions (short for regional governments) are understood more broadly. Accordingly, all federal studies are also regional studies, but not all regional studies are federal studies, because regional studies cast their

22. Ronald L Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 3rd edition, 2008).

23. Ivo Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987).

24. John Loughlin, *Subnational Government: The French Experience* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

25. Jim Bulpitt, *Territory and Power in the United Kingdom: An interpretation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

26. Benito Giordano, “Italian Regionalism or ‘Padanian’ Nationalism – the Political Project of the Lega Nord in Italian Politics,” *Political Geography* 19 (2000): 445–471.

Benito Giordano, “The Contrasting Geographies of ‘Padania’: The Case of the Lega Nord in Northern Italy,” *Area* 33:1 (2001): 27–37.

27. Kenneth C. Wheare, *Federal Government* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963).

28. Daniel J Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

29. Carl J. Friedrich, *Trends of Federalism in Theory and Practice* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968).

30. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

William Riker, “Six Books in Search of a Subject or Does Federalism Exist and Does it Matter?,” *Comparative Politics* 2:1 (1969): 135–46.

31. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*

net more widely.³² The ‘federalist’ criterion of constitutional entrenchment of regional power³³ fades away as unduly obstructing this view. Regional studies in this sense came to life amidst the inadequacy of classic federal studies to capture new phenomena in Western Europe.³⁴

A third perspective does justice to both previous opinions. It is the one adopted here, acknowledging, on the one hand, that regional studies focus on entities *other* than federations. Politics and the analysis thereof can be guided, but need not to be defined by legal criteria. The constituent units of federations represent something different from regions in a formerly unitary state, no matter how ‘special’ (Italy) or ‘historic’ (Spain). Constitutional entrenchment *does* matter as definiens, but need not exclude regional studies from territorial politics. They coexist alongside, under the umbrella of comparative territorial politics. On the other hand, federal studies *can* apply regional studies to explicitly federal states (federations), and regional studies *can* discuss regions also in federations. But there remains a qualitative difference between constitutionally entrenched sub-national units and those “*at the mercy of the centre*”.³⁵ Territorial politics is the family tree and federal and regional studies are separate branches thereof. Both are part of territorial politics (as discipline), which is then additionally made up of local government studies,³⁶ more sociological urban development studies,³⁷ and the more IR-inspired EU-studies and MLG.³⁸

In sum, territorial politics (as observation) are an integral part of what federal studies theorise about, for they encompass the “*origin and operation*”³⁹ of states, ‘federal societies’ in which societal diversity is “*territorially grouped*”,⁴⁰ philoso-

32. Michael Keating, *The New Regionalism in Western Europe: Territorial Restructuring and Political Change* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1998).

33. Henry Sidgwick cit. in Michael Burgess, *Comparative Federalism: Theory and Practice* (London/New York: Routledge 2006), 2.

34. Wilfried Swenden, *Federalism and Regionalism in Western Europe: A Comparative and Thematic Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

35. Daniel J. Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

36. Nelson Proby, “Preface” to *Decentralist trends in Western Democracies*, ed. Laurence J. Sharpe (London and Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), i-vii.

Edward C. Page, *Localism and Centralism in Europe: The Political and Legal Bases of Local Self-Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Laurence J. Sharpe, “The European Meso: An Appraisal,” in *The Rise of Meso Government in Europe*, ed. Laurence J. Sharpe (London and Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993), 1–39.

37. Neil Brenner, “Global cities, glocal states: global city formation and state territorial restructuring in contemporary Europe,” *Review of International Political Economy* 5:1 (1998): 1–37.

38. Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, *Multi-level Governance and European Integration* (Lanham, MD, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001).

Arthur Benz, *Politik in Mehrebenensystemen* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2009).

Simona Piattoni, *The Theory of Multilevel Governance. Conceptual, Empirical, and Normative Challenges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

39. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

40. E.g. William S. Livingston, *Federalism and Constitutional Change* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956).

phies on liberty and authority,⁴¹ manifestos on territorial restructuring by specific actors (the Federalist Papers, the Ventotene Manifesto etc.), and constitutional provisions such as those pertaining to second chambers, self-and shared rule.⁴² They also include, with ‘fiscal federalism’,⁴³ a universe on its own. In that sense, territorial politics constitute the specifically political part within federal studies. Associating federalism and territorial politics, the focus is on a) the specifically *political* dimensions within federalism: actors, power relations, input and throughput; as well as on b) the specifically *territorial* in politics: boundaries, jurisdictions, identity and ‘territorial justice’.⁴⁴

So much for the core of comparative territorial politics; now to its margins where I locate some of the literature from party politics, electoral studies, and political behaviour that fits the disciplinary description.

... and its margins

At first inspection, nothing relates party politics, electoral studies or political behaviour conceptually to territorial politics. They focus neither on ‘the political’ within territories, nor on ‘the territorial’ within politics, but on questions of organised interest aggregation (e.g. Sartori),⁴⁵ the translation of votes into seats,⁴⁶ and satisfaction, participation, trust and social capital,⁴⁷ respectively. But when studies from these fields end up discussing centralisation within parties,⁴⁸ the

41. Pierre Joseph Proudhon, *Du principe fédératif et de la nécessité de reconstituer le parti de la révolution* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1863).

Cf. Kyle Scott, *Federalism: A Normative Theory and its Practical Relevance* (New York, London: continuum, 2011).

42. Daniel J. Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

43. Richard M. Bird and Andrey V. Tarasov, “Closing the gap: fiscal imbalances and intergovernmental transfers in developed federations,” *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 22 (2004): 77–102.

Francesco Palermo, Elisabeth Alber and Sara Parolari, “Federalismo fiscale: una sfida comparata,” *Ius publicum europaeum* (eds. Padova: Cedam. 2011), 7.

44. Scott L. Greer, Introduction. In *Territory, Democracy and Justice* (ed. Scott L. Greer, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 1–17.

Scott L. Greer, “Conclusion: Territorial Politics Today,” in *Territory, Democracy and Justice*, ed. Scott L. Greer (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 257–274.

45. Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (ECPR Press: University of Essex Printing Centre, 2005 [1976]).

46. Andrew Reeve and Alan Ware, *Electoral Systems. A comparative and theoretical introduction* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992).

47. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Boston MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1965).

Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

48. Lori Thorlakson, “Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations,” *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 157–177.

nature of second-order elections⁴⁹ or the political culture of sub-national units,⁵⁰ then the focus is at least implicitly shifted on territory. As a variable, it enters the analysis in the form of an intervening factor⁵¹ on parties, parliaments, and the identity and legitimacy of and within society.

To take the example of ‘federal political parties’:⁵² they are both influenced by the institutional set-up of the state and at least partially responsible for changes in it.⁵³

This thought was developed in federal studies and taken further in party politics. For Riker,⁵⁴ a polity was federal to the extent that parties embodied federalism. He pioneered the ‘political’ approach to federalism with a focus on institutional bargaining *by* political actors, i.e., political parties. He saw in the structure of a party system the only reliable indicator of how centralised or ‘peripheralized’ a federal polity really was. Riker’s party-political approach to federalism reads as follows:

*The federal relationship is centralized according to the degree to which the parties organized to operate the central [national] government control the parties organized to operate the constituent [regional] governments. [...] the proximate cause of variations in the degree of centralization (or peripheralization) in the constitutional structure of a federalism is the variation in degree of party centralization.*⁵⁵

Later federal studies only occasionally treated political parties until, under the influence of ‘multilevel governance’,⁵⁶ the territorial dimension of politics acquired prominence again—but this time within party politics.⁵⁷ Political parties

49. Reif Karlheinz and Hermann Schmitt, “Nine Second-Order National Elections – A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of European Election Results,” *European Journal of Political Research* 8:1 (1980): 3–44.

50. J. Elkins Simeon, Richard and David, “Regional Political Cultures in Canada,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue canadienne de science politique* 7:3 (1974): 397–437.

51. Michael Burgess, “Territoriality and Federalism in the Governance of the European Union,” in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard (London: Routledge, 2006), 100–119.

52. Mikhail Filippov, Peter C. Ordeshook and Olga V. Shvetsova, *Designing federalism: a theory of self-sustainable federal institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

53. Jonathan Hopkin, Party Matters. “Devolution and Party Politics in Britain and Spain,” *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 179–198.

54. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

55. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance*, 129.

56. Bache, Ian, and Matthew Flinders, *Multi-level Governance* (eds, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Arthur Benz, *Politik in Mehrebenensystemen* (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2009).

57. Kris Deschouwer, “Political Parties in Multi-Layered Systems,” *European Urban and Regional Studies* 10 (2003): 213–26.

Jonathan Hopkin, Party Matters, “Devolution and Party Politics in Britain and Spain,” *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 179–198.

Hough, Dan and Charlie Jeffery, *Devolution and Electoral Politics* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

are discussed in a federal perspective by Chandler,⁵⁸ Hrbek,⁵⁹ Filippov *et al.*⁶⁰ and Swenden,⁶¹ while federalism is treated from a party-perspective by Thorlakson⁶² and Deschouwer.⁶³ MLG approaches equally tell us about the effect of territory on parties⁶⁴ or the other way round.⁶⁵ The key is that understanding the political view on federalism as a territorial view on politics entails concentrating on institutional and actor-related characteristics. A concept that facilitates such concentration is political territoriality, to which we turn next.

Political Territoriality: A Federal Concept?

The origins of political territoriality lie with human⁶⁶ and political geography,⁶⁷ medieval history,⁶⁸ state formation,⁶⁹ and International Relations.⁷⁰ It is however its use in human strategies ('territoriality') to which we limit our enquiry, and to its use in politics in particular. The aim of this section is to demonstrate how federal studies might gain in conceptual clarity by using this notion as an 'attention-directing device'.

58. William M. Chandler, "Federalism and Political Parties," in *Federalism and the Role of the State*, ed. Herman Bakvis and William M. Chandler (Toronto, London, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 149–170.

59. Rudolph Hrbek, *Political Parties and Federalism: An international comparison*. (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, ed. 2004).

60. Mikhail Filippov, Peter C. Ordeshook and Olga V. Shvetsova, *Designing federalism: a theory of self-sustainable federal institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

61. Wilfried Swenden, Ch 5, *Federalism and Regionalism in Western Europe: A Comparative and Thematic Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

62. Lori Thorlakson, "An institutional explanation of party system congruence: evidence from six federations," *European Journal of Political Research* 46 (2007): 69–95.

Lori Thorlakson, "Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations," *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 157–177.

63. Kris Deschouwer, "Political Parties as Multilevel Organizations," in *Handbook of Party Politics*, ed. Richard S. Katz and William J. Crotty, (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 291–300.

64. David S. Moon and Oivind Bratberg, "Conceptualising the Multilevel Party: Two Complementary Approaches," *Politics* 30:1 (2010): 52–60.

65. Klaus Detterbeck and Eve Hepburn, "Party Politics in Multi-level Systems: party responses to new challenges in European democracies," in *New Directions in Federalism Studies*, ed. Jan Erk and Wilfried Swenden (London and NY: Routledge, 2010).

66. Robert D. Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

67. John Agnew, *Political Geography: A Reader* (London: Arnold, ed. 1997).

68. Charles Tilly, *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, ed. 1975).

69. Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State," in *Political Geography: A Reader*, ed. John Agnew (London: Arnold, 1997), 58–81. [Originally published in *European Journal of Sociology* 25 (1984): 185–213].

70. John G. Ruggie, "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations," *International Organization* 47:1 (1993): 139–174.

Jeremy Larkins, *From hierarchy to anarchy: territory and politics before Westphalia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Origins and definition

To use political territoriality, two assumptions are made. Firstly, that in a political world (still) dominated by nation-states,⁷¹ the sum of politically relevant phenomena can be divided into two groups: those taking place *between* states and those taking place *within* states.⁷² Geopolitics and territorial politics are the respective disciplines committed to academically studying the relation between territory and power; intergovernmental relations can relate to both inter⁷³ and intrastate⁷⁴ processes. Secondly, that there is a qualitative distinction between area and territory.⁷⁵ Area is surface and extension, measured by spatial instruments such as maps.⁷⁶ Territory, on the other hand, is socially constructed, with including-excluding boundaries. Human action alone is what can transform area into territory.

For the geographer Robert Sack,⁷⁷ human territoriality is the intentional, strategic behaviour whereby control over area is exerted through physical delimitation of access, the non-observance of which ensues in sanctions. The emergence of the territorial state can be read as the “*prime example of the logic of territoriality*”.⁷⁸ Beginning not with Westphalia but with Augsburg, ‘*cuius regio, eius religio*’ paved the way for further territorial exclusiveness among, and increased inclusiveness within, political entities.⁷⁹ Where the Holy Roman Empire as a “*neither purely anarchical, nor purely hierarchical*”⁸⁰ entity disappeared, the EU eventually took centre stage on territorially similar, yet of course democratically different principles. EU decision-making is neither ‘de-’ nor ‘post’, but ‘re-territorialised’, because

71. Ron Johnston, “Out of the Moribund: Territory and Territoriality in Political Geography,” ed. *Political Geography* 20:6 (2001): 677–693.

72. John Agnew ed, *Political Geography: A Reader* (London: Arnold, 1997).

73. Andrew Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe. Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht* (London: UCL Press, 1999).

74. Nicole Bolleyer, “Intergovernmental Arrangements in Spanish and Swiss Federalism: the Impact of Power-Concentrating and Power-Sharing Executives on Intergovernmental Institutionalization,” *Regional & Federal Studies* 16:4, (2006): 385–408.

75. Jean Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1973).

76., William D. Pattison, “The Four Traditions of Geography,” *Journal of Geography* 63:5 (1964): 211–216.

77. Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*.

78. Hans Vollaard, “Political Territoriality in the European Union. The Challenging Boundaries of Security and Healthcare” (Ph.D. diss University of Leiden (NL), 2009), 70.

79. Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State. A Sociological Introduction* (London: Hutchinson & Co Ltd. 1978).

Joseph R. Strayer, *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

80. Benno Teschke, “The metamorphoses of European territoriality. A historical reconstruction,” in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, London: Routledge, 37–67 (2006): 41.

[...] the supranational level of mobilising economic and political resources is just that—an elevated arena of public policy activities for the member states. Territorial interests have therefore merely been elevated to a different arena that has the institutional capacity to accommodate sub-state local-regional, national, European and increasingly international dimensions of public policy.⁸¹

More generally, different types of strategic alliances are possible between supranational, national, and local/regional actors in the EU.⁸² It is these phenomena that political territoriality assists in understanding, by directing attention to the multi-dimensionality of political systems and the implications this has for students of territorial politics. Political territoriality sums up the broad attempt to create, maintain, or otherwise modify political power by controlling area, thereby transforming it into territory. The two qualifications applied here to Sack's definition⁸³ merit emphasizing:

- (Human) Territoriality is narrowed down to *political*. Politics, as stated above, operates within a system of rules, actors and policies. Any other approach to territoriality—psychological,⁸⁴ anthropological,⁸⁵ ethological⁸⁶ etc.—is irrelevant here.
- The focus of political territoriality is on (political) *power*, that is faculties potentially used to influence the “*authoritative allocation of values for the whole society*”.⁸⁷

Political territoriality so defined can be included in accounts for the *de facto* break-up of the Holy Roman Empire, when various functions (e.g. guaranteeing religious peace) could not be fulfilled on this very wide territory anymore, but also for state integration into the ‘political system of the EU’,⁸⁸ where political territoriality points (mainly) in the reverse, ‘upward’ direction. It does not, by itself, explain anything, but serves as an analytical framework. It may for example help our understanding of why the construction of a European identity is ob-

81. Michael Burgess, “Territoriality and Federalism in the Governance of the European Union,” in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard (London: Routledge, 2006): 109–110.

82. Sidney Tarrow, “Centre-Periphery Alignments and Political Contention in Late-Modern Europe,” in *Restructuring Territoriality: Europe and the United States Compared*, ed. Christopher K. Ansell and Giuseppe Di Palma (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 45–64.

83. Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*

84. Julian J. Edney, “Human Territoriality,” *Psychological Bulletin* 81 (1974): 959–75.

85. Michael Saltman, *Land and Territoriality* (ed. Oxford: Berg, 2002).

86. Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative: A Personal Inquiry into the Animal Origins of Property and Nations* (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 7th ed 1975 [1966]).

87. David Easton, *The Political System. An Inquiry into the State of Political Science* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 9th ed 1968 [1953]), 129.

88. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition 2005).

structed by nation-states, as liberal intergovernmentalists point out (because the electoral and hence legitimising dimension remains national),⁸⁹ but furthered by other actors (such as Members of the European Parliament or political parties),⁹⁰ as neo-functionalists are keen to emphasise. As an essentially federal concept, political territoriality relates the three dimensions to be taken into account when analysing political systems at any scale. To these dimensions we turn next.

Analytical framework

If political territoriality denotes a general strategy to modify the values authoritatively allocated in a political system, then territory is an intervening variable. Territory is used by political actors to build institutions and/or to (de-)centralise decision-making.⁹¹ These actors are shaped by these structures, in turn: as agents of the different levels of statehood they decide on policies, as competitors for political power on the different levels they are guided by the respective institutional rules.⁹² Hence, political territoriality refers to all three dimensions of political systems: institutional design (polity), processes and actors (politics) and outputs (policy).

Polity-dimension

Political territoriality can be measured by operationalising the institutional set-up of a given 'body politic.'⁹³ For Duchacek,⁹⁴ "[d]ividing and subdividing the world according to the territorial principle is probably as old as humanity." Any division of governmental power is accomplished in either of two ways: power can be divided among institutions on the same level, or it can be divided among institutions on different levels. The first possibility we call a horizontal division of power, because authority remains on the same level—the European, the national, the regional, or the local level, as the case may be. The second possibility we call a vertical division of power, because here power is distributed among various levels—power is delegated 'downwards' or 'upwards'. In practice, both methods are

89. Moravcsik, *The Choice for Europe. Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht*.

90. Robert Ladrech, "Europeanization and political parties," *Living Reviews in European Governance* 4:1 (2009). <http://www.livingreviews.org/lreg-2009-1> (accessed 14 February 2012).

91. Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 3rd edition 2008).

Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun. 1992 [1919]).

Kenneth C. Wheare, *Federal Government* (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1963).

92. Wilfried Swenden and Bart Maddens, Introduction. "Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe: A Framework for Analysis," in *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe*, ed. Wilfried Swenden and Bart Maddens, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). 1–30

93. Daniel J. Elazar, *Exploring Federalism* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987).

94. Ivo Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987), 3.

applied at the same time; conceptually they are separable. The same categorisation is undertaken by Maass⁹⁵ when speaking about a “*capital division of power*”, meaning the division of power “*at the capital city of a defined political community*”, as opposed to an “*areal division of power*”, denoting a division “*among areas or regions which exist or can be created within the political community*”. But ‘capital division of power’ is an ambiguous term, and ‘areal division of power’, though technically correct, tends to obfuscate the fact that once power is accorded to specific areas, these are precisely transformed into territories on their own. To speak of horizontal and vertical division of power is more accurate and has become academic standard.

Vertically dividing political power is territorial institution building par excellence. This is what federalism and regionalism, but also localism and European integration, are all about. In other words: territory is a variable taken into consideration for creating, maintaining or otherwise modifying European, national, regional, or local institutions. Maass referred to this process as a division of power by way of different constituencies: “*In a general way, it is axiomatic that an areal [i.e., territorial or vertical] division of powers assigns to the several levels of government representation of diverse constituencies.*” However, the notion of ‘constituency’ (which we reserve for electoral districts; cf. below) points to the fact that these levels need to be legitimate—or, to put it less normatively: governments strive for legitimacy, and although they may do so for various reasons, what matters here is that every government does. For Burgess and Vollaard,⁹⁶ a first of their “*indicators designed to assess the political significance of territory in all of its multifaceted dimensions*” is the legitimacy of an institutional set-up. And this we can measure as the degree to which people’s “*loyalties and identities*” are conditioned by territory.⁹⁷

Territory as such is either not important at all, or very important for people’s collective identity at any given level—or somewhere in the middle. Moreover, collective ‘emotional attachment to a particular territory’ may be higher to one than to another level, and/or compete with an aspiration to be identified based on functional (what people do: their profession) or personal (what people are: their religion or race) differentiation.⁹⁸ For example, in the Middle Ages, “[t]he scale of allegiance of most men would have gone something like this: I am first of all Christian,

95. Arthur Maass, “Division of Powers: An Areal Analysis,” in *Area and Power. A Theory of Local Government*, ed. Arthur Maass, (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959), 9–26.

96. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, “Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World” in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, (London: Routledge, 2006), 5.

97. Ibid.

98. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, “Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World”, 6.

second Burgundian, and only third a Frenchman.”⁹⁹ Intuitively, a comparative use of the concepts of loyalty and identity makes more sense than treating them in abstract isolation.

Territory is at the same time the most powerful and the easiest way to obtain a community’s loyalty, which in turn renders its institutions legitimate. Territory is powerful because of its durability (or ‘geographical fixity’), and easy to achieve because not more than a boundary, in essence a line on a map, needs to be drawn. The extremes of this mechanism, as Robert Sack¹⁰⁰ has put it, are staked out by a “*territorial definition of social relationships*”, on the one hand, and a “*social definition of territory*”, on the other. It was, again, in the Middle Ages when “*the defence of the faith came to be linked to the defence of a country*”.¹⁰¹ “*The formation of (European) states, in other words, meant that individuals [...] now held land on the basis of a notion of territorial citizenship—that is, their inhabitation of a particular territory—rather than as a result of their relationship, whether real or fictitious, with the leader of their kin-group or tribe. [...] a territory ordered through society became a society ordered through territory.*”¹⁰²

In this way, the “*territorial strategy at national level [...] led to the legal principle of territoriality*”,¹⁰³ to an extent that not only the (legal) principle supplanted the (political) strategy, but that henceforth the very idea of sovereignty could not be conceived of in nonterritorial terms anymore. The state, in this perspective, transformed itself from a functional into a territorial entity, in all its bounded durability supposedly the personification of ‘modernity’.¹⁰⁴ Seen from the point of view of political territoriality, the (territorial) state is the most extreme,¹⁰⁵ but by far not the only example of territorial institution building.¹⁰⁶

Explicitly relying on Robert Sack, Penrose in turn argues that ‘homeland’ is created in four stages. First, in delimiting a territory ‘natural boundaries’ are invoked, as “*an attempt to draw on the legitimacy and immutability that the concept*

99. Joseph R. Strayer, *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 253.

100. Robert D Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 36.

101. Jean Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1973), 34.

102. Rhys Jones, “The Mechanics of Medieval State Formation: Observations from Wales,” *Space & Polity* 3:1 (1999): 85–99.

103. Hans Vollaard, “Political Territoriality in the European Union. The Challenging Boundaries of Security and Healthcare” (Ph.D. diss., University of Leiden (NL). 2009), 703 .

104. Cf: Gianfranco Poggi, *The Development of the Modern State. A Sociological Introduction* (London: Hutchinson & Co Ltd.1978), xiii

105. Vollaard, “Political Territoriality in the European Union. The Challenging Boundaries of Security and Healthcare.”

106. Michael Keating, “Thirty Years of Territorial Politics.” *West European Politics*, 31:1 (2008): 60–81.

of nature has come to bestow”.¹⁰⁷ Next, through time, the “*continuous occupation of a territory results in the literal merging of people with this territory*”,¹⁰⁸ to an extent that land and people become indistinguishable: France is where the French live, and French is spoken in (the ‘territory’ of) France. In a third stage, people really feel ‘at home’ in ‘their’ territory: this in turn facilitates, indeed reifies both the inclusionary (‘we’) and exclusionary (‘them’) side of nationalism. Finally, mythologisation exalts the instrumental nature of territory into something sacred, intrinsic, eternal.¹⁰⁹ What matters for our understanding is that we can now link territory as a variable in the process of nation building with the ideas of the ‘new regionalism’ and the ‘regional state’. Thus we can imagine not only regional nationalism as ‘regionalism’, but also local nationalism as ‘localism’—or ‘autonomism’¹¹⁰ and ‘parochialism’,¹¹¹ respectively.

Policy-dimension

Once the levels are defined and upheld as to the underlying loyalty, one needs to address the “*distribution and circumscription of basic competences*”.¹¹² Equally, for Maass,¹¹³ the ‘areal division of power’ can be achieved by assigning “*certain functions [...] to the central government, others to state or provincial governments, and yet others to municipal and local governments*”. The sum total of all governmental functions is imagined as a finite list of tasks,¹¹⁴ and from this list some functions are assigned to the national, some to the regional, some to the local, and some to supra-national levels. This has repercussions on the significance of the respective level.

But framing competencies territorially is a gradual and at times contentious process. In the EU, the centralisation of economic competencies took place earlier than that of ‘classic’ nation-state functions such as external affairs: the single market preceded the single ‘EU foreign minister’ (the High Representative of the

107. Jan Penrose, “Nations, states and homelands: territory and territoriality in nationalist thought,” *Nations and Nationalism* 8:3 (2002): 280–281.

108. Ibid.

109. Penrose, *Nations and Nationalism*, 282.

110. Jaime Lluçh, “Autonomism and Federalism,” *Publius* 42:1 (2012): 134–161.

111. Ivo Duchacek, *Comparative Federalism: The Territorial Dimension of Politics* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987).

112. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, “Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World,” in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard (London: Routledge, 2006), 6.

113. Arthur Maass, “Division of Powers: An Areal Analysis,” in *Area and Power. A Theory of Local Government*, ed. Arthur Maass (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959), 9–26.

114. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964), 52.

Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy) by some 25 years.¹¹⁵ Also, there is (yet) no standing ‘EU army’, while the euro passes one solidarity test after the other. It is interesting to note in this regard how the EU rediscovered the principle of subsidiarity (Art. 3b. 3 of the Lisbon Treaty). The Protocol on the Application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and Proportionality, attached to the Lisbon Treaty, translates this idea into practice:

*Any draft legislative act should contain a detailed statement making it possible to appraise compliance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. [...] The reasons for concluding that a Union objective can be better achieved at Union level shall be substantiated by qualitative and, wherever possible, quantitative indicators.*¹¹⁶

Subsidiarity is the legal expression of the principle presumption “*that public activities should be carried out at the lowest government level consistent with efficiency considerations.*”¹¹⁷ For the EU, that it be better achieved by local, then by regional, then by national, and only *then* by EU-authorities. Conceptually, Burgess argues that:

*[t]he key to understanding the link between subsidiarity and federalism, then, lies in the uniquely Christian democratic approach to power and authority. There is essentially a pluralist conception that favours the dispersion of power both territorially and functionally. Taking its cue from Catholic doctrine, man is a member of certain natural groups—the family, the craftsmen, the profession, the commune, the region, the neighbourhood—which are natural law entities whose autonomy should be protected by the state.*¹¹⁸

More generally, the literatures on federalism,¹¹⁹ decentralisation,¹²⁰ and regionalism¹²¹ conceive three sets of competencies, which can be vertically divided: administrative, fiscal and legislative. The first and least extensive option is to provide for administrative capacities among different territorial layers. This includes the provision of paid employees, purchased cars, rented buildings etc.

115. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition, 2005).

116. Art. 5 of the Protocol on the Application of the Principles of Subsidiarity and Proportionality.

117. David J Collins, “The 2000 Reform of Intergovernmental Fiscal Arrangements in Australia”. Paper prepared for the International Symposium organised by the Commission sur le déséquilibre fiscal, Québec, 13–14 September. 2001 31

118. Michael Burgess, *Comparative Federalism: Theory and Practice*, 175

119. Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems*.

120. Tulia Falleti, “A Sequential Theory of Decentralization: Latin American Cases in Comparative Perspective,” *The American Political Science Review* 99:3 (2005), 327–346.

121. Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks and Arjan Schakel, “Regional Authority in 42 Democracies, 1950–2006 : A Measure and Five Hypotheses,” *Regional and Federal Studies* 18:2-3 (double special issue), (2008): 111–302.

“[A]dministrative decentralization”, for Watts,¹²² equals the “allocation of administrative responsibilities assigned by the constitution or developed through delegation or intergovernmental agreements”. The extent of such administrative control can be approximated by looking at the “relative sizes of the public services of each level of government”.¹²³ This would give an idea of the relative importance of a certain territorial layer. The agency implementing public goods, or delivering the services to the citizens, can thus be analysed territorially. This refers to “the way in which rulers provide their services and allocate values and benefits”.¹²⁴ Is it the local officers implementing national functions, national officers charged with local tasks—or both, but for different policy sectors? Answering this question in general, and even more so for every sector, is impossible, reminding us of Grodzins’ ‘marble-cake’ metaphor.¹²⁵ But that a complete answer is impossible does not mean that one should not investigate.

A second possibility of vertically sharing powers is to empower territorial units on another level through fiscal instruments. It is then defined which territorial level can levy what kind of taxes or fees, who is to pay for and receive grants or shares of what kind, and how much of all that. Fiscal federalism, as a discipline, has prominently argued some basic principles. Most importantly, citizens have territorially varying ‘preferences’. This is expressed in the ‘decentralization theorem’.¹²⁶ Otherwise, that is if territorial preferences are either not accounted for, or only wrongly, then the polity risks ‘externalities’, referring to a mismatch between mentioned ‘daily practices’ and governmental services. The positive side of such territorial-financial matching are economies of scale.¹²⁷ Attempts in network governance studies have tried to account for the effect of this on people’s perceptions through the concepts of ‘output legitimacy’.¹²⁸

The third and ultimate option involves delegation of legislative powers, understood as the competency to frame collectively binding norms, rules, and conventions into positive law. For Watts, ‘legislative decentralization’ is composed of “the formal allocation by the constitution of legislative powers to each level of government” as well as “the degree of autonomy with which a government may exercise the

122. Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems*, 67.

123. *Ibid.*

124. Burgess and Vollaard, “Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World,” 6.

125. Martin Grodzins, *The American System. A New View of Government in the United States*, Ed. Daniel J. Elazar (New Brunswick & London: Transaction Books, 1984 [1966]).

126. Robert D Ebel and Serdar Yilmaz, *Concept of Fiscal Decentralization and Worldwide Overview*. World Bank Institute 2002, 3. <http://www.desequilibrefiscal.gouv.qc.ca/en/pdf/ebel.pdf> (last accessed: Feb 2011).

127. Bochsler, Daniel, “Neighbours or Friends? When Swiss Cantonal Governments Co-operate with Each Other,” *Regional & Federal Studies* 19:3 (2009): 355.

128. E.g. Fritz W Scharpf, *Governing in Europe. Effective and democratic?* (Oxford: OUP, 2002[1999]).

legislative jurisdiction assigned to it".¹²⁹ Unlike subsidiarity, which is a fundamental principle, legislative competencies frequently change from exclusive to shared to concurrent and back. Exclusive powers mean that normative decisions in a specific policy field are taken by one governmental entity only: foreign affairs and defence are usually regarded as exclusive national competencies. However, with the emerging of the European Union, foreign affairs increasingly came to be decided in intergovernmental forums.¹³⁰

Politics-dimension

Political territoriality also refers to the actors aspiring for power. Political actors negotiate and decide, they bargain and publicly defend, and they compete and strive for occupying the places in governmental institutions at any level. Political parties in particular aggregate (material) demands, recruit (personnel) support, and, as 'throughput', participate in transforming inputs into outputs. With regard to such aggregated inputs into decision-making processes,¹³¹ conceptualise the exact "*composition, policy aims and operation of interest groups, political parties and social movements*" as regards territory. However, they rightly caution that as long as territory as such does not determine a particular organisational structure or mobilisation strategy, the "*patterns of geographical [i.e., vertical or territorial] distribution of certain political groupings and sectors should not be viewed as political territoriality per se*".¹³² This is to say that we need to analyse carefully as to whether political parties—the most important agents between society and government—consider territory an asset enhancing their internal structure, or whether they *nolens volens* accept that they have to mirror a certain state structure. I simplify the roles of political parties into electoral participants, coordinative organisations, and parliamentary decision-makers.

A first way to look at the territorial character of political parties is via the *electoral system*. Riker¹³³ spells out the underlying assumption:

[T]he essence of local autonomy has little to do with whether or not the central constitution grants particular rights to local officials but has very much to do with whether or not local officials are elected by or are in some other way responsive to local citizens.

129. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems*, 66.

130. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition, 2005).

131. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, "Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World" in *State Territoriality and European Integration: Territoriality and Federalism in EU Governance*, ed. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard (London: Routledge, 2006), 7.

132. Michael Burgess and Hans Vollaard, "Introduction: Analysing Westphalian States in an Integrating Europe and a Globalising World", 7.

133. William Riker, "Six Books in Search of a Subject or Does Federalism Exist and Does it Matter?" *Comparative Politics* 2:1 (1969): 139.

Any governmental level with such a popularly elected council performing legislative or quasi-legislative functions is accompanied by (formalised) rules and (social) conventions guiding its election. One way or the other, the territorial variable is always used to design the number and type of electoral districts, the 'constituencies'. Two extremes are possible. In proportional systems the whole territory for which a representative council is to be elected can be formed into a single multi-member constituency. On the national level, Israel, Moldova, Monaco, Serbia, Slovakia, Timor Leste, and Ukraine elect their only, Kazakhstan (House of Representatives), Paraguay (Senate), Palau (Senate), Russia (State *Duma*), and Uruguay (Senate) one of their two chambers in this way.¹³⁴ The other extreme is displayed by the electoral system of the United Kingdom, where the whole territory is partitioned into n single-member constituencies, with n corresponding to the number of seats in the House of Commons; currently 649. While the UK practises plurality vote (or First-Past-The-Post, FPTP), France for example with its 577 single-member constituencies for the *Assemblée nationale* has opted for majority vote (or Two-Round-System, TRS).¹³⁵

The result in terms of territorial representation is the same for FPTP and TRS: UK Members of Parliament (MPs) and French *députés* remain, for the entire duration of the legislature, attributable and thus accountable to 'their' constituency. The opposite counts for a single, nationwide multi-member district, which "provides no formal scope for representation of local or regional interests."¹³⁶ Informally, parties may provide for territorial representation on their lists, but such a provision is not mandatory by way of the electoral system *stricto sensu*. Territorial representation is (also) a function of the electoral system.

Secondly, political parties' *internal territorial organisation* is revealing as well. Organisation may take place primarily along national or along regional/local lines. As Hutchcroft¹³⁷ states it: "*National political parties, particularly if they are cohesive and well disciplined, will have the potential to serve as a centralising force and curb localist tendencies.*" In this context, Thorlakson measures the territorial organisation of parties in federal systems by assessing the following three variables:

134. PARLINE "Parliaments Online" *database of the International Parliamentary Union*.
<http://www.ipu.org/parline>.

135. *Ibid.*

136. Paul D. Hutchcroft, "Centralization and Decentralization in Administration and Politics: Assessing Territorial Dimensions of Authority and Power," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 14:1 (2001): 35.

137. Paul D. Hutchcroft, "Centralization and Decentralization in Administration and Politics: Assessing Territorial Dimensions of Authority and Power," *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration* 14:1 (2001), 36.

Vertical integration refers to the extent and strength of formal and informal linkages between state and federal parties. [...] Influence refers to the extent to which the state party organizations exercise control in the governance of the federal party, while autonomy tells us whether these integrative linkages result in control over another party level.¹³⁸

Clearly, influence and autonomy are two sides of the same coin, the former referring to a bottom-up (regional branches influencing national party decisions), the latter referring to a top-down mechanism (autonomy as regional freedom from national interference). Vertical integration, in turn, is associated with “*formal organisational linkages such as a common party membership, shared finances and a common governance structure*”.¹³⁹ A ‘nonintegrated’ political party is one that “*organizes and competes at both the state and federal levels but shares neither a common governance nor membership structure*”.¹⁴⁰ However, a party may be regionalized to an extent that there is not even a national formation at all; examples include the Catalan *Convergència i Unió* (CiU), the Bavarian *Christlich-Soziale Union* (CSU), the Italian *Lega Nord*, or the Swiss *Lega dei Ticinesi*. These parties are ‘multilevel’ only to the extent that they participate in national and regional elections.¹⁴¹

A third aspect of territoriality in the politics-dimension is *the territorial character of legislatures* themselves. The possible trade-offs between ‘one man, one vote’ and ‘one area, one vote’ are ranked on a continuum by Rodden.¹⁴² There are three criteria that influence a political system’s location. The first relates to who the MPs are. In town meetings and the Swiss *Landsgemeinde* (the open-air assembly still practised in two cantons), individuals directly decide, and there is no scope for territorial representation other than of the system-level itself. In the UK, MPs are accountable to constituencies which do not correspond to sub-national governments, while for the Italian and the US-Senate they do. This has potentially a different impact on both direct territorial representation parties as important resources. Finally, the German *Bundesrat* and the EU Council of Ministers consist of members appointed by lower-level governments. Lower-level governments partake in the exercise of shared-rule *qua* territorial polities. Second, are the votes weighted? The basic democratic principle of ‘one man, one vote’ is applied only

138. Lori Thorlakson, “Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations,” *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 160, emphasis added.

139. Thorlakson, “Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations,” 161

140. *Ibid.*

141. Wilfried Swenden and Bart Maddens, “Introduction. Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe: A Framework for Analysis,” in *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe*, ed. Wilfried Swenden and Bart Maddens, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.) 1–30 (2009): 9.

142. Jonathan Rodden, “Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement,” *Comparative Politics* 36:4, (2004) 485.

in unitary systems. All federal and confederal systems apply some form of malapportionment: two votes per one State in the US Senate, weighed voting in Germany and the EU Council of Ministers. Third, what majority is needed for policy change? Simple majorities are generally required throughout the examples used by Rodden;¹⁴³ only the EU Council of Ministers votes by double, on request even triple majority.¹⁴⁴ When unanimity is required, as in the European Council, each polity has an absolute veto.

The Territoriality of national political systems

Table 1: Political territoriality at the national level

Criteria	Type of National Political System				
	Centralised Unitary	Unitary Decentralised	Regionalised	Federal	Confederal
<i>Territorial loyalty</i>	mainly N	N > L	N = R	N = R (= L)	R (> L) > N
<i>Political symbolism</i>	N with sovereignty	N sovereignty, L autonomy	N sovereignty, R autonomy	N and R shared sovereignty	R with sovereignty
<i>Representation</i>	MPs elected as individuals	MPs elected based on L	MPs elected based on R	MPs elected based on (and in) R	MPs appointed by R
<i>Political Parties</i>	monolevel (N)	monolevel (N)	multilevel	multilevel	monolevel (R)
<i>Legislation</i>	exclusively N	exclusively N	N and R	N and R (and L)	mainly R
<i>Financing</i>	mainly N	mainly N	N and R	N and R (and L)	exclusively R
<i>Administration</i>	N and L	N and L	N, R, and L	N, R, and L	exclusively R
<i>Examples</i>	Greece, Ireland, Portugal, LUX	Scandinavian countries, France	Spain, UK, Italy	Germany, Canada, Austria, USA, B	NL (1579-1795), USA (1781-89)

Source: Own compilation based on Loughlin (2000), Rodden (2004), Swenden (2006), Watts (2008)

Key: N = National, R = Regional, L = Local Governments

143. Jonathan Rodden, "Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement," *Comparative Politics* 36:4 (2004).

144. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition, 2005).

For illustration purposes, I now apply this conceptual framework to nation-states. The rows in Table 1 represent the dimensions and sub-dimensions of political territoriality, the columns the ideal-types so defined.

At one extreme, only the national level is 'sovereign' and loyalty is undivided.¹⁴⁵ At the other extreme, the 'regions' really are fully-fledged states.¹⁴⁶ Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected as individuals and political parties function as monolevel organisation¹⁴⁷ in centralised unitary states, whereas MPs are appointed by member states to represent *their* interest, in confederal systems. This pattern is present also in the allocation of competencies. More interesting are the cases between the extremes. For all these systems, different institutions 'rule' over territories of different extent, most functions are shared or concurrent, and each layer corresponds to a separate arena of 'multilevel' political competition.¹⁴⁸ Matching these inductive patterns of political territoriality with types of territorial state configurations deduced from the literature on territorial politics¹⁴⁹ reveals that there is more to it than a simple continuum, let alone a dichotomy of unitary/federal states. Rather, there are separate continua for each of the seven aspects political territoriality has directed our attention to.

This means that in discussing the specifically territorial elements of (federal) political systems, analysing only one or two of the three dimensions is incomplete and thus likely to lead to false conclusions. Three possible fallacies exist. First of all, both institution building through territorial loyalty and the formal sharing (or not) of competencies need to be taken into account. Legally 'objective' provisions, such as the Treaty basis of the EU, matter as much as individually subjective perceptions, for example Union wide solidarity while accepting economic differences. Autonomy and sovereignty are often mere symbols in the political

145. Daniel Treisman, *The Architecture of Government: Rethinking Political Decentralization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Bjørna, Hilde, and Synnøve Jenssen, "Prefectoral systems and central-local government relations in Scandinavia," *Scandinavian Political Studies* 29:4 (2006): 308–332.

146. Murray G. Forsyth, *Unions of States: The Theory and Practice of Confederation*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1981).

147. Jonathan Rodden, "Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement," *Comparative Politics* 36:4 (2004): 481–500.

148. Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks, *Multi-level Governance and European Integration* (Lanham, MD, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001)

149. John Loughlin, "Regional Autonomy and State Paradigm Shifts in Western Europe," *Regional and Federal Studies* 10:2 (2000): 10–34.

Jonathan Rodden, "Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement" *Comparative Politics* 36:4 (2004): 481–500.

Wilfried Swenden, *Federalism and Regionalism in Western Europe: A Comparative and Thematic Analysis* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

Ronald L. Watts, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press, 3rd edition, 2008).

discourse, but politics being highly symbolic, these can prove powerful.¹⁵⁰ Neglecting the one can mean overstating the other. Secondly, political parties organise along institutional structures, e.g. they compete for the new offices in the Italian regions;¹⁵¹ they call for further devolution, e.g. the SNP in Scotland;¹⁵² or they place territorial identity at the core of their manifestos, e.g. the *Lega Nord* as a ‘regionalist populist party’.¹⁵³ In all three situations, parties are multilevel organisations, inserting themselves into and/or arguing for more (meaningful) “arenas for political struggle”.¹⁵⁴ Analytically, they can only be separated from their competitive environment at the expense of external validity. Thirdly, the (de-)centralisation of decision-making affects legislative, fiscal and administrative authority at the same time.¹⁵⁵ Legislative functions are least likely to be decentralised, while administrative functions are most readily delegated to another territorial layer of government.¹⁵⁶ But this varies across time, space and policy area.

The figure below models the four elements of political systems:¹⁵⁷ polity, politics, policy and the interaction between them. Whether the centre always ‘overawes’ the periphery (as in centralised unitary systems), or the whether the periphery always ‘overawes’ the centre (as in confederal systems)¹⁵⁸ is then determined by the interplay of actors, processes, institutions and policy outputs. For example, minority parties may gain experience by coming to power in regional governments, which enhances their recruitment possibilities and strengthens their overall legitimacy; naturally, once in power, they will ask for more policy competencies, which in turn may affect people’s loyalty to this now ‘meaningful’ level of government. The “slippery-slope”¹⁵⁹ argument similarly predicts that through devolution, the costs for final secession are lowered. A similar circular-

150. David Delaney, *Territory: A Short Introduction* (Malden, Oxford and Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 2005).

151. Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 60.

152. Paolo Dardanelli, “Europeanization as Heresthetics: Party Competition over Self-Government for Scotland, 1974–97,” *Party Politics* 15:1 (2009): 49–68.

153. Duncan McDonnell, “A Weekend in Padania: Regionalist Populism and the Lega Nord,” *Politics* 26:2 (2006): 126–132.

154. William M Chandler, “Federalism and Political Parties,” in *Federalism and the Role of the State*, ed. Herman Bakvis and William M. Chandler. (Toronto, London, Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 149–170.

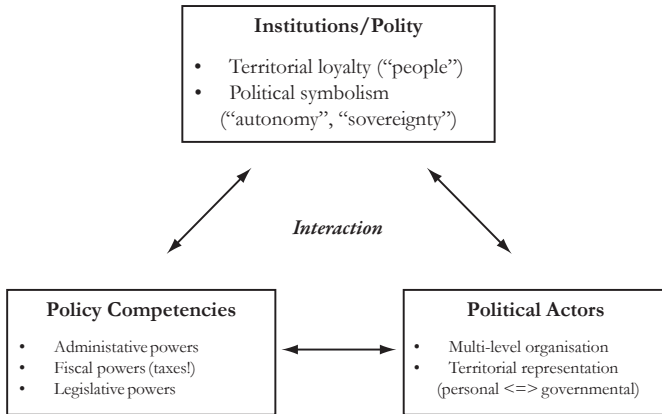
155. Hooghe, Liesbet, Gary Marks and Arjan Schakel, “Regional Authority in 42 Democracies, 1950–2006 : A Measure and Five Hypotheses.”

156. Ronald L. Watts, Ch 12, *Comparing Federal Systems* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 3rd edition, 2008).

157. Simon Hix, *The Political System of the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2nd edition, 2005).

158. William Riker, *Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance* (Boston: Little Brown, 1964).

159. Erk, Jan, and Wilfried Swenden, “The new wave of federalism studies,” in *New Directions in Federalism Studies*, ed. Jan Erk and Wilfried Swenden (London, New York: Routledge, 2010), 1–15.



ity is argued to exist for political parties in the EU by Ladrech.¹⁶⁰ Studying one aspect of territoriality in the context of political systems contributes to a better understanding of its dynamics, reasons and impacts on other aspects.

Conclusion

In this article, the discipline of comparative territorial politics has been defined as concerned with both the territorial in politics and the political in territories. As an essentially federal discipline, it has been linked to several related research traditions, the most prominent being regional and local government studies, MLG and other EU studies. Analyses from more distant branches of political science (electoral studies, party politics and political behaviour) are included only insofar as they use territory as an intervening variable. The notion of political territoriality has then been elaborated to conceptualise the multi-dimensionality of territorial politics. Political territoriality was defined as that form of strategic behaviour with the potential to influence all three dimensions of political systems. As an attention-directing device, it points to seven indicators:

All polities are grounded constitutionally, by statute or contract.¹⁶¹ Territorial loyalty ensures legitimacy, stylised into ‘autonomy’ or ‘sovereignty’.¹⁶² Institution building through 1) *areal loyalty* and 2) *political symbolism* are the two

160. Robert Ladrech, “Europeanization and political parties,” *Living Reviews in European Governance* 4:1 (2009). <http://www.livingreviews.org/lreg-2009-1> (accessed 14 February 2012).

161. Mény, Yves and Vincent Wright, “General Introduction. in *Centre-Periphery Relations in Western Europe*,” ed. Yves Mény and Vincent Wright (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), 1–9.

162. John Loughlin, “Regional Autonomy and State Paradigm Shifts in Western Europe,” *Regional and Federal Studies* 10:2 (2000): 10–34.

related aspects in the polity-dimension of political territoriality:¹⁶³ “*territory as homeland*”.¹⁶⁴

The territoriality of politics points to the need for indicators of 3) *processes* (elections and representation;¹⁶⁵ and 4) *political actors* (e.g. the ‘vertical integration’ of political parties); *territory as constituency*.¹⁶⁶

In the policy dimension, territory serves as a structural device for allocating specific, inherently local, regional or national functions.¹⁶⁷ Each can be divided into a 5) *legislative*, 6) *financing* and 7) *implementation* stage.¹⁶⁸ In each stage area, through territorial boundaries, is made equivalent to certain rights and responsibilities: *territory as jurisdiction*.¹⁶⁹

In applying the conceptual framework to nation-states, it has been shown that to speak of a single federal-unitary dichotomy is inadequate. Decentralisation is a) a continuum that b) relates to each (sub) dimension of a political system separately. Revisiting or ‘recalibrating’ the federal framework of analysis as one of political territoriality contributes to a better, because more fine-grained understanding of institutions, processes, actors and interactions between them.

The importance of studying the territorial aspects of politics has long been emphasised by federal studies. But reframing this enquiry in a way both narrower (*only* politics) and wider (*anything* territorial) fulfils two essential purposes: it creates a disciplinary unity around the core of territorial politics, which is federal studies; and it allows for a variety of entry points into that core, for example multilevel parties, local elections, network governance, Europeanization, or sub-state loyalty.

Abstract

The core issues comparative territorial politics addresses are how and why territory is used to delimit, maintain, or create political power; and with what kind of consequences for efficiency (output) and legitimacy (input). The aim of this article is to integrate various research strands into the comparative study of territorial politics, with federal studies at its core. As an example of a conceptual payoff, ‘political territoriality’ refers the observer to three dimensions of the strategic use of areal boundaries for political power.

163. Nicole Töpferwien, “Defining Local Government – Political Constraints and the Question of Boundaries,” (Paper presented at the VIth World Congress of the IACL in Santiago de Chile, 2004).

164. Jan Penrose, “Nations, states and homelands: territory and territoriality in nationalist thought,” *Nations and Nationalism* 8:3 (2002): 277–297.

165. Jonathan Rodden, “Comparative Federalism and Decentralization: On Meaning and Measurement,” *Comparative Politics* 36:4 (2004): 481–500.

166. Lori Thorlakson, “Patterns of Party Integration, Influence and Autonomy in Seven Federations,” *Party Politics* 15:2 (2009): 157–177.

167. James W. Fesler, “Approaches to the Understanding of Decentralization,” *The Journal of Politics* 27:3 (1965): 536–566.

168. Maass Arthur, “Division of Powers: An Areal Analysis,” in *Area and Power. A Theory of Local Government*, ed. Arthur Maass (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959), 9–26.

169. Chris Skelcher, “Jurisdictional Integrity, Polycentrism, and the Design of Democratic Governance,” *Governance* 18:1 (2005) : 89–110.

By focusing on territory as a key variable of political systems, the actors, processes and institutions are first analytically separated and continuously measured, enhancing internal validity, and then theoretically integrated, which allows more valid external inferences than classic, legal-institutionalist federal studies. After discussing the boundaries and substance of comparative territorial politics as a federal discipline, political territoriality is developed towards an analytical framework applicable to politics at any governmental level. The claims are modest: political territoriality does not serve so much as an explanatory concept as rather an 'attention-directing device' for federal studies.

Résumé

Les questions fondamentales abordées par la politique territoriale comparée étudient pourquoi et comment le territoire est utilisé pour délimiter, maintenir et créer du pouvoir politique ; et quelles en sont les conséquences pour l'efficacité (output) et la légitimité (input). L'objet de cet article est d'intégrer différentes formes de recherche dans l'étude comparée de la politique territoriale, en considérant en son cœur les études fédérales. La « territorialité politique », conçue comme une résolution conceptuelle, renvoie l'observateur aux trois dimensions de l'utilisation stratégique des frontières terrestres dans la recherche de pouvoir politique. En se concentrant sur le territoire comme variable clé des systèmes politiques, les acteurs, processus et institutions sont tout d'abord distingués analytiquement et mesurés continuellement, pour accroître leur validité interne, et ensuite intégrés dans la théorie. Ceci permet une meilleure validation des variables externes qu'avec une approche classique, fondée sur les études fédérales légales-institutionnelles. Après avoir considéré les frontières et la substance de la politique fédérale comparée comme discipline fédérale, on développe la territorialité politique comme cadre analytique applicable à l'étude de la politique à quelque niveau gouvernemental que ce soit. Les propositions en sont modestes : la territorialité politique ne doit pas tant être utilisée comme concept explicatif des études fédérales que comme un outil visant à attirer l'attention du chercheur sur ces problématiques.