1. *Geography’s cultural legacy*

Over the last few years, geographers have been asking about the question of culture in geography. With the advent of non-representational theory and the dominance of process ontologies, it has been difficult to discern what exactly is cultural about contemporary cultural geographic work and whether the question of culture still has relevance within the discipline (Tolia-Kelly, 2016). As Anderson (2019) puts it, “a series of partially connected trajectories have left cultural geography with an ambivalent, strained relation to culture as a concept, even as culture continues to function as a placeholder term” (2). Similar Wylie (2016) states that “the question of ‘culture’ seems to have fallen into abeyance…unless I have overlooked things drastically, not many cultural geographers have grappled recently with their putative *ur*-concept” (376). Of course, it is precisely culture’s status as an originary concept that has led to this situation and there are good reasons why the concept has been, if not rejected, then certainly questioned as analytically useful. My aim here, however, is not to diagnose our current theoretical moment. On the contrary, it is to suggest that the question of culture has always been a vexed one for the discipline. And if there is any potential for salvaging the concept, it might be useful to look back at geography’s history.

And yet, to suggest that geography has a history of grappling with the question of culture is not a straightforward claim. There are no books in geography dedicated to the question of culture and precious few extended encyclopaedia entries on the history of culture’s theorisation from a geographic perspective (c.f. Barnett, 2009; Gibson, 2017). Indeed, the phrasing we are more familiar with in geography is cultural – cultural landscapes, cultural ecology, cultural turn – rather than culture itself (Wylie, 2010).[[1]](#endnote-1) This is not to minimise cultural geography’s lasting impact on the discipline nor to suggest that the culture concept has not been an ongoing concern for the field. Rather, geography’s engagement with the culture concept (its theorisation of the culture concept) has tended to be implicit. Landscape as a way of seeing, landscape as text, the diffusion of cultural patterns, regional personalities, signifying systems, all these ideas certainly imply specific renderings about what culture is and how culture works, but they do not constitute the explicit treatment of the concept we find in Levi-Strauss (1969), Williams (1971), Geertz (1973) or Clifford (1988).[[2]](#endnote-2) On the contrary, geography’s approach to the culture concept has been tangential. Thus, if there is a canon of cultural theory to be found in in the discipline, it is one that requires explicit excavation (Barry 2015). The aim of this paper is to reconstitute this legacy and in doing so illustrate how it potentially points towards some novel directions for the culture concept in geography’s future.

The central argument of this paper revolves around two big points. The first requires the most exposition and takes up the majority of the paper. The argument is that geography not only has a tradition of cultural theory but a tradition that can be categorised into two main schools. The Anthropogeographical School, which focuses on human-environmental interactions and the Landscape School, which focuses on cultural representation. What distinguishes these schools is not simply the different theoretical concepts they develop, but the fundamentally different ways they approach the question – i.e., the different ways they understand what the phenomenon of culture is. In the Anthropogeographical School, the question of culture revolves around the habits, sensibilities and inclinations of particular communities residing within particular places. Culture is thought in terms of the ingrained and non-reflective ways communities learn to practically engage with their environment, what Vidal de la Blanche calls the *genre de vie* – the habits of life. In the Landscape School, the question concerns how communities and groups represent their society and community. Thus, questions about meaning and identity are at the forefront. The emphasis is not on what people do but how such doings are thought and represented. The first (and dominant) aim of this paper is to illustrate these schools by examining some of their chief proponents and the theories of culture they develop. This means looking at the cultural theories of Ratzel, Vidal de la Blanche, Sauer and new cultural geographers.

The second big point is that even though these schools represent two different perspectives on what culture is and how culture works, they are both legitimate and necessary approaches. Thus, in the final section, I argue that the question being asked by these approaches are questions that need to be asked if we are to understand the phenomenon of culture properly. In other words, it argues that culture is both a question of habits (of ingrained manners of doing, practicing and living) and a question of meaning (of investment, care and representation). It also argues that these questions are two very different questions and need to be addressed on different terms. The first question is a question about bodies and their worlds and the second is a question about why subjects come to *invest* in those worlds – i.e., why do subjects identify habits of living not simply as habits but as habits that are *theirs*? The aim is to illustrate how the concept of culture embeds two different and distinct phenomena: a phenomenon of living and a phenomenon of investing, caring and attaching meaning to those forms of life. Both questions need to be addressed when conceptualising culture and they need to be addressed on their own terms.

Taken together, these two points lead to a final more implicit point which is that geography is well-placed to revive the question of culture in new terms. The bulk of the paper is dedicated to illustrating geography’s history of struggling with the question of culture through these two schools: one exploring ways of life and the other questions of meaning. While the former has once again become dominant, the latter still matters. The point is not that geography needs to return to questions of meaning at the expense of habit. On the contrary, it is a call to return to questions of meaning in a manner that acknowledges habit as a necessary component of understanding what culture is and how culture works. Understanding habit and ways of life only gets us so far on its own. While anthropogeographical theory can help us understand how bodies come to embed certain ways of living, it cannot help us understand why subjects come to claim those forms of life as *theirs*. There is another question (a second question) residing at the heart of process theories of life and living; questions about why subjects care about those ways of living and why they claim them as their own. This is what I will come to call the second question of culture; a question that has been ignored in recent years and needs to be redressed.

Before moving forward, it is important to qualify what this project is (and is not) trying to do and the manner in which it makes its arguments. First, while the bulk of this paper is devoted to an historical excavation of the culture concept in geography, this is a strategic reconstitution that serves a contemporary purpose.[[3]](#endnote-3) By threading together a distinctly geographical approach to culture, the paper aims to recuperate a geographical tradition that is relevant and timely. Indeed, at the heart of this paper is the presumption that there is still work to be done on the question of culture and that geography (because of its legacy) is well-suited to take up the task.[[4]](#endnote-4) This brings us to the second qualifier, which is that the history is selective and inherits all the problems selectivity brings. While Sauer, Cosgrove and Daniels might be expected in a history of culture in geography, Ratzel and Vidal de la Blanche are less obvious. The abiding rationale behind such choices is the clarity with which the authors address culture or culture-like questions and the extent to which they contemplate underlying mechanics. That said, such selectivity inevitably leads to the elevation of some work over others. Thus, the discussion of new cultural geography, for example, minimises work associated with the cultural turn in favour of earlier work which explicitly theorises culture. The final, and perhaps most important, qualifier is that the aim of this article is to *begin* a conversation about the question of culture in geography. This means that the argument is preliminary. Its emphasis is on excavating an approach. How that approach affects geography’s future is speculative – even as it establishes a direction for future work.

The argument is divided into five main sections. The first four focus on excavating the two dominant traditions of cultural theory in the discipline represented by four key theorists: Ratzel (section 2), Vidal de la Blanche (section 3) Sauer (section 4) and new cultural geography (section 5). In each case the emphasis is on excavating latent theoretical architectures concerning what culture is and how culture works. Section 6 develops the second point discussed above. Specifically, it explores how and why the question of culture needs to be thought through both schools and why geography is well-placed to do so.

1. *Ratzel and the tradition of anthropogeography*

While it may be unconventional to locate the origin of the culture concept in geography with Ratzel’s Anthropogeography, it is not particularly controversial. As Speth (1978) suggests, Ratzel’s text was as formative for geography as it was for sociology and anthropology. Both Boas and Durkheim where enthusiastic readers of Ratzel and sought to establish their traditions in distinction to his programme for human geography (also see Powell 2015). Writing at a time when geography was primarily a discipline of landforms, Ratzel sought to establish the role of people in shaping the earth’s distinctive regions and places. In his study of the Americas he emphasised migration, settlement patterns, economy and technology. In his study of the Mediterranean, he explored the role of trade, civilisation and hybridisation (Petri, 2016). Both early studies were to form the basis of his Anthropogeography; a work whose goal was not only to establish a distinctive domain of human geography but to do so by identifying the human mechanisms behind geographical differences. To be sure these mechanisms were indicative of their time, in the sense that they are articulated in the language of natural laws and causal relations (Lossau, 2009). But as Natter (2005) and others (Livingstone, 1993; Lossau, 2009; Malpas, 2008; Malpas, 2006; Peake, 2017) argue, these appropriations do not adequately address the subtlety of Ratzel’s endeavour, particularly as it relates to his attempt to explain culture, and its concomitant forms of social organisation, in a manner that is rooted in geography

Ratzel’s theory of culture is predicated on his conception of *volk*, which translates as ‘people’ or ‘group’ and how the *volk* is constituted through its relation with the earth or soil (*boden*).[[5]](#endnote-5) For Ratzel, *boden* is the community’s unique topographical geological and bio-geological homeland and as such it instils certain characteristics into the *volk’s* nature and temperament. While it is tempting to understand the relationship between *boden* and *volk* in a deterministic manner, it would be more accurate to characterise it as dependent (Hunter, 1983). Without question the constitution of the *volk* is ontologically linked to the environment. As Ratzel states, *boden* is essentially interlaced with the *volk’s* entire being (see Imort, 2000: 60). Yet as Mercier (1995) argues, the relationship is more interactionist than it seems. Critically, it would be wrong to understand the relation as a genetic determinism, whereby the environment directly shapes temperament and nature. For Ratzel, the environment shapes and constrains the *volk*’s options and capabilities and – in the process – its personality. As he states, “there never was a time when man could, without trouble, acquire food, shelter, livelihood, by drawing upon Nature. Nature nowhere brings the food to his mouth, nor roofs his hut adequately over his head.” On the contrary, “the various artifices by which [man] manages to exploit what Nature freely gives indicate *a certain development of the faculties*" (Ratzel, 1896: quoted in Mercier 1995, my emphasis). In this sense, *boden* structures the way the *volk*’s habits practices and personality develop and in doing so provides a natural homeland for the *volk*’s distinctive lifestyle. Thus, as Lossaue (2009) suggest, the *boden* should be thought less as a habitat and more as the *volk*’s natural and most fitting home. It is the environment from which the *volk* emerged – with its unique manners, habits, personality – and from which it continues to draw its sustenance and vitality. It is by adapting to a particular *boden* that the *volk* becomes bonded to that place. As such the *boden* operates as a cultural hearth for the *volk*; a spiritual homeland through which the *volk* is nourished and replenished.

Without question Ratzel’s staging of the relationship between *boden* and *volk* anticipates the blood and soil epistemologies of early 20th century eugenics, particularly in the US, and it is no surprise that Ratzel is often accused of essentialising. Yet as Natter and Lossau suggest, it is Ratzel’s interest in migration and movement that vividly illustrates the dynamism and openness of his framework. For along with the natural bonds that attach a people to its land, there is also the law of *Lebensraum*, the force that compels a people to expand and grow beyond the confines of their original settlement (Smith, 1980). For Ratzel, *Lebansraum* is not a mechanistic compulsion, but a natural outgrowth of a people successfully thriving within their domain and their need (based upon demands of resources and economy) to expand. In this sense, *Lebensraum* represents a tension inherent to the *boden*-*volk* relation. As the *volk* become attuned to their *boden* and thus ‘fitted’ to their environment, they also become restless; seeking new resources, developing new forms of trade and economy and encountering new environments and peoples.

What is interesting about *Lebensraum*, however, is not its status as a theory of expansion, but how that theory embeds a conception of intra-cultural encounter. As already suggested, Ratzel understands the *volk* as an expression of its unique homeland and the way it has adapted to the earth. Yet, once that *volk* moves, it is not as if those characteristics stay static. While the *boden* will always represent the *volk*’s home, encounters with others – other people and other landscapes – force adaptation and change. In Ratzel’s earlier work these changes were primarily thought in social Darwinist terms (Petri, 2016). Thus, Ratzel imagined hierarchies of *volk* cultures where different cultural ‘strengths’ compete for dominance. In his later work, these hierarchies were disbanded in favour of a more interactionist tone. In particular, Ratzel discusses contact zones – border areas where different cultures interact and adapt. Borders do not represent strict demarcations between *volk* and territory but a site of cultural fluidity and dynamism (Cuttitta, 2014). In addition, these border processes (and the forms of adaptation and change they facilitated) are essential for cultural advancement (Natter 2005). Cultures became strong not by staying in place, but through accumulating change. Thus, even as *boden* provides a spiritual hearth to which the *volk* would always be bonded, progress meant leaving that hearth behind and engaging with otherness. As Ratzel states “it is an entirely erroneous opinion to believe that a people is stronger in every regard, the more uniform it is. In fact, exactly in those peoples who have achieved the most, multiple races and nationalities are at work together in achieving political and all the more, economic success” (Ratzel, 1906: quoted in Natter 2005). While there is a whiff of Lamarkianism here (i.e., people evolve by accruing a long history of adaptation and change), it nonetheless marks out an adaptive and interactionist conception of culture.

In sum, it is often presumed that Ratzel’s most significant contribution to geographic thought is in political geography and geopolitics. Yet, I would argue that Ratzel is first and foremost a cultural theorist whose ideas about politics, expansionism and the state only make sense when they are understood through his conceptualisation of the *volk*. As Smith (1980) suggests, “a state, for [Ratzel], *was simply the result of a particular people's adaptation to an environment*. The form that a state or an entire culture took was therefore shaped by the relationship to *Lebensraum* and the struggle for it” (53 my emphasis). In other words, Ratzel’s political geography is an expression of his cultural geography. The state expresses a distinctive *volk* and the dynamics of expansion, migration and adaptation that are a necessary part of the *volk*’s development. The political dynamics that Ratzel outlines in his *Political Geography*, are thus fundamentally grounded in the cultural dynamics he develops in the *Anthropogeography*. Indeed, I would go as far as to argue that Ratzel’s political geography can be thought as the cultural politics of the *volk*; the politics of different group identities embedded in dynamics of migration, expansion and exchange.

Sadly, however, it is precisely this cultural element – and its insistence on interaction and dynamism – that was lost in the environmental determinist frameworks promoted by Ratzel’s most famous students, Ellen Churchill Semple (1968) and Ellsworth Huntington (1934). But it was not lost on one of Ratzel’s admirers in France who developed these interactionist mechanisms into one of the most significant movements in the history of geography – an emerging descriptive science of regions.

1. *Vidal de la Blache and régional personnalité*

If the previous section used Ratzel’s theory of the *volk* to situate an emergent geographic theory of culture, this section does the same with Vidal de la Blanche’s concept of *genre de vie*. While both terms have a distinctly anthropological ring, the latter hews more closely to ideas being promoted by Boas and his followers in the early 20th century, many of whom were eager readers of Vidal (Buttimer, 1971; Speth, 1978). What makes *genre de vie* distinct from Boas’ conception of culture is its insistence on the inseparability of land and life (Powell, 2015). For Vidal any attempt to understand a culture must include an analysis of the milieu in which that community operates and resides. In addition, any geographic understanding of regions must also be an understanding of culture, that is, a question about the kinds people that live in a place and the ways of life those places embody. The aim of this section – like the last - is to excavate this cultural dimension and illustrate how Vidal’s theory of the region is also a theory of culture.

As numerous commentators have suggested, *genre de vie* can be defined as the social structure by which societies both adapt and are adapted to their environment (Mercier, 2009). As Vidal states (1926), the *genre de vie* represents a “geographical bond” that unites people to place in a manner where they are utterly inter-dependent. The environment is what shapes the *genre de vie* but the habits that come out of it also leave their imprint upon the landscape, such that the landscape and the people constitute “a composite”: a set of “heterogeneous beings” held together in “mutual vital relationships” (De la Blache 1926, quoted in Buttimer, 1971). This interactive, holistic system is the cornerstone of Vidal’s thought. Yet to understand the *genre de vie* properly we need to clarify its theoretical structure. The key to this lies in properly understanding its vitalism and its materialism.

In terms of its vitalism, Archer (1993) argues that Vidal’s work embeds elements from Lamarck whose theories (along with Darwin’s) were in high circulation in France at the time. Specifically, he focuses on the idea that animate processes are imbued with a latent vital force; as Lamarck (1914) puts it: “every body possessing life…is permanently or temporarily animated by a special force, which incessantly stimulates movements in its internal parts and uninterruptedly produces changes of state” (quoted in Archer 1993: 505). While Vidal does not cite Lamarck, one can certainly see the echoes of this vitalism in his conception of human-environmental interactions. For Vidal, human-environmental relations are driven by ‘mutual instigations’ that stimulate each other into various kinds of responses. In addition, the process is predisposed towards self-organisation and naturally works to integrate wayward energies into its systematising fold. In this manner, geographic regions become increasingly unified, particularly as relations became ever more overlapping and complex. It is thus no surprise that we see the rise of highly influential civilisations and forms of political organisation (i.e., empires) that include and consolidate numerous ethnicities, languages and cultures as they naturally expand, integrate and adapt. For Vidal, the regional units formed by human-environmental relations were highly robust and capable of adapting to the myriad external disturbances caused by migration or trade. Thus, it was only extreme disturbances (e.g., war and famine) that tended to undermine regional systems as they pushed the unit, and the *genre de vie* that sustained it, beyond their tipping point.

In terms of materialism, the relations that anchor and sustain the *genre de vie* are those grounded in what Vidal terms *livelihood*. While Vidal understands human forces and environmental forces as wholly integrated, he also understands them as very different. Environmental forces are primary because they establish certain parameters for the possible, but human forces are more powerful due to their capacity to overcome natural obstacles. In addition, his emphasis on human ingenuity is itself grounded in his conception of livelihood. i.e., the need to materially sustain the community. Even as Vidal flatly rejects economic determinism, he understands livelihood as the underlying engine of the *genre de vie*. As Buttimer (1971) suggests, “livelihood provided the label, the core around which a whole network of physical, social and psychological bonds evolved” (53). We can see this emphasis most obviously in his method. For Vidal, the key indices for determining a *genre de vie* are: “(1) the fundamental lines of material production as related to local natural resources; (2) the dietary patterns in terms of their local availability or commercial cost; [and] (3) the blend of agricultural and nonagricultural activities within the region” (Buttimer 1971, 55). The point here is not that material production is a determinant of *genre de vie* but the engine. A single milieu with the same ecological-biological conditions could host a range of different *genre de vie*. Thus, there is no necessary relations between certain climatic-ecological conditions and the kinds of habits that transpire there. But those conditions will always be the driver of *genre de vie* in general. It is the need to generate and sustain a livelihood that stimulates human ingenuity and forces certain habits to take shape.

Given the discussion thus far we can see how the *genre de vie* operate as a theory of regional integration and the development of regional livelihoods, but it is not necessarily clear how it constitutes something we would recognise as a theory of culture. To make this leap we need to understand that Vidal (1911) conceptualises habits of life not simply as systems of labouring, producing and shaping the world but habits that instil certain traits: “systematically organized habits” he states “are reinforced through successive generations . . . which leave their mark on the *spirit*” (194, my emphasis, quoted in Buttimer 1971). Thus, in his discussion of American regional identity, he connects the American character to its wide-open spaces and its use of technology: “United States social life differs from that of Europe in scale, nature, and culture. There is a low density of population and great distances . . . over all one finds the triumph of mechanization and technology. The giant transportation patterns and potential for circulation has influenced the American mind: their habits of living reflect this great potential mobility” (Blache, 1902: quoted in Buttimer 49). Elsewhere he discusses how the development of ‘higher civilization’ in Europe was due to the extremely varied physical environment, giving “the peoples which surmounted them…profit by the results of a collective experience gained in a variety of environments” (Blache, 1926: 18) as well as by the interchange between these groups through trade and migration (see Archer 1993). While there is a certain essentialism operating here, the engine of regional personality is grounded in a theory of human-environmental interaction. As subjects corporeally adjust themselves to the work they need to do, given the environment they are in, those actions impose certain rhythms to the way they think and respond. While Ratzel emphasised the *boden* as primary and introduced cultural variation through the process of *Lebensraum*, Vidal puts greater emphasis on human ingenuity and the vital energies of adaptation. In either case, both authors introduce an approach to the question of culture that positions place (and the ecological and historical forces therein) to be the constitutive element in the emergence of cultural forms.[[6]](#endnote-6)

In sum, the aim of the last two sections has been to illustrate the basic theoretical approach and architecture of what I am terming the Anthropogeographical School of culture. While I have focused specifically on the work of Ratzel and Vidal, it is important to emphasise that they do not simply introduce geographic theories of culture, they also introduce a geographic approach to culture. For all the insistence that regional geography is a descriptive tradition (a characterisation promulgated by its advocates as much as by its critics), there is a clear red thread of theory that runs alongside its oft-critiqued ‘encyclopaedic’ approach (Clout, 2003; Matless, 1992). A thread that begins with Ratzel and Vidal but is developed by numerous regional geographers along the way (Turnock, 1967), including the regional folklore tradition of Fleur in the Aberystwyth School (Jones and Fowler, 2007), the work of Geddes, Fagg and Herbertson of the Scottish School (Matless 1992), and the debates about regional consciousness that characterises humanistic geography (Buttimer, 1976; also see Prieto, 2012; Relph, 1976) as well as the more recent work of Aansi Paasi’s (2003) on regional political identity. Such work invites further avenues of cultural theory that could and should be excavated. Yet, rather than mining this dig-site further, I want to turn to the very different tradition of cultural geography; a tradition that brought culture to the forefront of geography and developed the concept of culture itself in distinctive terms.

1. *Sauer and landscape interpretation*

The second tradition of cultural theory this paper explores is the landscape tradition initiated by Carl Sauer (1925). With Sauer we have the first explicit attempt to think through the question of culture in geographical terms. And yet, this is not to say that Sauer developed a distinctive theory of culture. While he introduced a new mode of geographic research and that mode of research took culture to be its central concern, the extent to which Sauer develops a new theory is a matter of some debate. Duncan (1980) argues that Sauer advanced a superorganic theory of culture based upon the ideas of his colleague at Berkeley Alfred Kroeber (1952). Solot (1986) however, argues that Sauer was not very interested in Kroeber’s theory nor in theory more broadly. In a similar manner, Wagner and Mikesall (1978) have argued that Sauer and the Berkeley tradition did not take much interest in the inner workings of culture. Culture rather, was treated as a black-box and as such facilitated a tradition of cultural geographic practice rather than cultural geographic concepts. To be sure there is ample evidence that Sauer was suspicious of theory and emphasised the importance of fieldwork and observation over armchair contemplation. However, it would be too far to suggest that Sauer does not advance a geographic theory of culture (Entrikin, 1984); a theory that situates culture within distinctive terms and that was highly influential in the discipline (see Duncan 1980). In addition, I would argue that Sauer’s conception of culture does seem influenced by the work of Kroeber as well as by Kroeber’s overall outlook and approach to the practice of anthropology. Thus, while I agree that Sauer’s dominant interest was in developing an approach to geography, that task required a theoretical anchor; a concept of culture that would facilitate cultural geography and orient cultural geographic research. The aim of this section is to make this anchor more explicit and think through its implications.

Like Ratzel and Vidal before him, Sauer’s key concern is accounting for the role human’s play in shaping the earth’s surface. In the work of Semple and Huntington, whose research was dominant in the US at the time, Ratzel’s subtle relation between earth and migration is lost in favour of scientistic methods deployed to correlate climate and racial typologies. It is against this crude determinism that the anthropologist Franz Boas would, as Livingstone (1993) notes, conduct a polemical crusade. Criticising the idea that earth, climate and topology could provide a conceptual ground for various forms of social organisation, Boas argues that geographers work too hard to derive all forms of human life from their environment, despite the fact that no archaeological or anthropological evidence has emerged to support them (see Boas, 1932; 1936; also see Powell 2015). While Sauer was eager reader of Boas, it was Boas’ students, Alfred Kroeber and Robert Lowie, both of whom resided in the Department of Anthropology at University of California Berkeley, that would have a direct influence on his approach.

The concept of culture that Kroeber advocates is based upon three key principals. The first is that each culture is idiosyncratic and unique. The emphasis of anthropological research, therefore, should be on cataloguing and describing distinctive ‘cultural styles’ (Sinha and Sinha, 1968). The second principal is that these styles express a culture’s broader civilizational capacities. Even as every culture should be considered in terms of its uniqueness, it must also be approached in terms of its ‘civilizational context’ (Kroeber, 1952). Specifically this mean examining how (for example) individual achievement is enabled or discouraged by a group’s civilizational resources: “inherent ability was given scope by high points of civilisation, and obversely the scarcity of great men during periods of cultural decline or dark ages was the function of contexts that caused genius to remain latent” (Steward et al., 1961: 1052). In this manner, Kroeber attempts to account for the deep structures that allowed certain cultures to flourish. This leads to the final principal which is that these deep structures are essentially historical. History presents cultural groups with certain civilisational challenges which force communities to adapt and develop (White, 1946). If a cultural group can overcome its circumstance it will develop and evolve. If it cannot overcome them, it will diminish and disappear. Unlike evolution, Kroeber argues, civilisations can learn from these challenges and accrue knowledge in a cumulative manner, leading to further development and improvement. In this regard, it is important to understand culture (in Kroeber’s terms) as a form of trans-consciousness predicated not on an idea of innate collectively but on accrued historical knowledge: “history”, Kroeber states, “has its own method, its own equivalent to the causality of science” (Kroeber, 1917: 208).

There were many aspects of Kroeber’s framework that appealed to Sauer and that he would incorporate into his own conception of culture. The first principle is that Sauer, like Kroeber, understands culture as holistic and as something that expresses itself through specific styles. While Kroeber focuses on patterns of pottery and adornment, Sauer focuses on patterns in the landscape – e.g. housing styles, farming styles and other landscape forms. “All geography is physical geography” Sauer states “not because of an environmental conditioning of the works of man, but because man, himself not directly the object of geographic investigation, has given physical expression to the area by habitations, workshops, markets, fields, lines of communication. Cultural geography is therefore concerned with those works of man that are inscribed into the earth's surface and give to it characteristic expression” (Sauer, 1931: 622). Sauer’s second principle is that cultural styles rise and fall through time. While he does not embed Kroeber’s notion of cultural evolution, he does conceptualise historical forces as having a weakening and/or strengthening effect on cultural patterns. We can see operating in Sauer’s conception of ‘cultural hearths’: specific territories where a cultural style is dominant and its patterns diffuse across a wide area (Sauer, 1952; also see Wylie, 2007). This process of concentrating or diffusing landscape patterns is indicative of events that work to weaken and/or strengthen a culture’s distinctive style. Sauer’s final principal is that culture has unimpeachable agency on the landscape. What made Sauer’s conception of culture revolutionary is precisely its insistence that culture is the dominant variable in the organisation and patterning of our geographical world. In Sauer, the interactionist mechanisms that defines regional geography are replaced by a framework that emphasises culture’s capacity to imprint itself on a passive topology. This allows geographers not simply to map culture but trace its rise and fall through time and space. This is, perhaps, the most original component of Sauer’s framework; that is, the idea that culture is no longer formed through environmental input but through its own historically derived patterns. The concept not only provides a novel conception of culture in geography but allows for a certain kind of cultural practice to take shape. The study of landscape was utterly beholden to a concept of culture that made the environment its cipher. And in doing so it allowed for the development of a unique kind of geographical practice. It is no surprise, therefore, that fieldwork and observation became a key component of his conception of geographical practice.

To round off this section, I want to briefly return to the point above about Sauer’s relative lack of interest in the ‘inner-workings’ of culture. I have argued that Sauer did have a working theory of culture, even if it is not always explicit or framed in robust conceptual terms. Yet, this is not to suggest that Sauer was interested in the inner workings of culture. My argument is that Sauer theorised culture as a system of broad sociological patterning. And while Kroeber did think through the mechanisms that generated those patterns (via his conception of cultural evolution), Sauer did not take up those arguments. Yet there is one aspect of Sauer’s work that does potentially speak to culture’s inner workings. As Clark suggests, one aspect of Sauer’s work that is often forgotten is his enduring interest in economy: “The largest single theme…clear in the writings of…the Berkeley groups…has been the emphasis on…man’s use, alteration, and rearrangement of his only potentially permanent resources: water, soil, vegetation and animal life” (Clark, 1954: 89). This emphasis is evident in Sauer’s (1941) work on Mexico and the way he uses the diffusion of production systems (e.g., farming patterns) to determine cultural hearths. In this light, it could be argued that Sauer, like Vidal and Ratzel before him, anchored his conception of culture within a notion of livelihood. Yet if this characterisation is deemed to be a stretch too far for Sauer, it would certainly hold for Sauer’s students, particularly those associated with cultural ecology. Influenced by anthropologists such as Steward (1972), Keesing (1974) and Rapaport (1984), geographers such as Denevan (2001), Butzer (1993) and Zimmer (1996) explore how landscapes reflect not simply cultural patterns but cultural patterns of material production (see Mathewson, 2011). In this framing, culture retains its ‘whole system’ framework, but the system itself is understood in materialist terms. As Robbins (2004) argues, the aim of cultural ecology is to understand how groups approach and solve environmental problems (related to systems of production) and how such approaches express themselves in the landscape. In this sense, cultural ecology would come to crack the black box of culture, even as it left the culture as pattern concept largely intact.

1. *New cultural geography and the cultural turn*

I began the previous section by suggesting that the Landscape School constitutes an alternative approach to culture from that proposed by anthropogeographers. However, when one looks closely at Sauer’s theory, it does not look radically different from the ideas of Ratzel and Vidal. While the source of culture’s pattern is history (rather than environment) and the emphasis is on culture as a force (rather than culture as a result), it still emphasises bodies and habits over meaning. What *is* distinctive, however, is its interest in landscape – i.e., in geography as a pattern or expression of culture. It is this dimension that would be picked up and developed by ‘new’ cultural geographers with a revitalised conception of culture at its core. Drawing from the emerging field of Cultural Studies, particularly the work of John Berger (1972a; 1972b) and Raymond Williams (1971; 1977; 1981), new cultural geographers were the first to theorise culture explicitly as something separate from (though still related to) environment. This section reviews some of the key ideas in Cultural Studies and links them to evolving geographical ideas about culture.

In many ways, the problem of culture set out by Williams was one that cultural geographers could readily relate to. As Williams (1981) suggests, the culture concept, by the late 1970s, had ossified into two dominant paradigms. The first was what Williams calls a ‘whole way of life’ school, an approach subscribed to by many regional geographers, humanistic geographers and those in the Berkeley School. Here culture operates as an inner ‘spirit’, inherited and accrued through history, which situates a distinctive perception of the world and its attributes. This worldview appropriates new information in distinct ways and in accordance with cultural pre-suppositions that keep it consistent with its dominant mind-set. It is precisely this holism, this capacity for all aspects of the world to be subservient to the dominant culture, which allows it to leave a unique cultural trace in the world. The second paradigm is a ‘whole social order’ approach, which was subscribed to by cultural ecologists and early forms of Marxist and feminist geography. In this framing, culture is grounded in underlying material needs and circumstances. It is rational and universal rather than spiritual and idiosyncratic. Culture does not come upon people through random historical situations. On the contrary, how people organise culturally is dependent on their material circumstances and how they to respond to them.

Williams writes from the latter perspective and thus understands culture as something intimately connected to material processes. And yet he is simultaneously critical of the inclination to conceptualise culture as epiphenomenal, that is, as an expression or consequence of economic necessity. As he states, while it is “certainly an error to suppose that values or art-works could be adequately studied without reference to the particular society within which they were expressed…. it is equally an error to suppose that the social explanation is determining, or that the values and works are mere by-products” (Williams, 2003: 31). In response, Williams gives culture a far more powerful role. Rather than conceptualising culture as tethered to the necessities of economy, it as a central force in its development: ““cultural practice’ and ‘cultural production’” he states, “are not simply derived from an otherwise constituted social order but are themselves major elements in its constitution” (Williams 1981: 12-13). In this framework, culture comes to occupy a mediating third term between economy and society. It is what he calls a ‘signifying system’ though which “a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored” (13).

The significant theoretical development here pivots on this transformation of culture from a material pattern to a symbolic order; a signifying system which works to communicate normative ideas about the social order which are pervasive and often unnoticed. In Berger’s (1972b), analysis of European painting, he argues that the painting cannot be seen as something that transcends culture – i.e., as something seeking universalist ideals – but as wholly embedded in cultural values: “it is usually said that the oil painting in its frame is like an imaginary window open on to the world, we are arguing that if one studies the culture of the European oil painting as a whole…it’s not so much a framed window open to the world as a safe let into the wall” (109). Berger’s point is that European painting gives insight into our own secret lives - i.e., our own unquestioned presumptions about what is normal, valuable and in need of being represented. Thus, it is no surprise that a culture obsessed with property and possession is replete with images of landowners and landscapes. While such images appeal to our aesthetic sensibilities, they also reflect deeply embedded conceptions of beauty and composition and their concomitant association with ownership and order. In addition, because these values are framed as universal, ideal and eternal, they hide their cultural uniqueness as well as how they reinforce the power relations imminent to the society they represent.

This conception of culture is familiar to most geographers today. The idea that culture is a signifying system that mediates and reinforces social ideologies, was readily picked by cultural geographers on both sides of the Atlantic and came to define an era in the discipline. Indeed, cultural geography was well-suited to Bergers’ and Williams’ theories. As a discipline dedicated to exploring the social, cultural and political forces shaping the material world, it could take Berger’s interest in painting (or Williams’ interest in literature) and illustrate the implications for our most immediate environments. Thus, Duncan and Duncan (1988) illustrate how everyday streets, parks and neighbourhood are not simply reflections of rationale design but are indicative of deeply held normative ideas about who belongs where which we may be largely unaware of (123). Similarly, Daniels (1989) argues that the meaningful nature of landscape seduces us into forms of attachment that perpetuate injustice and ingrained social hierarchies. It is not simply that the landscape is dual - i.e., both meaningful and powerful. It is duplicitous – i.e., the former disguises the latter.

There are many things to say about this conception of culture as well as the legacies and debates it initiated. Yet in thinking through its long-term contribution to the culture question, I would suggest that it maintained cultural geography’s holistic conception of cultural but modifies in two significant ways. First, it anchors culture in material relations and second it theorises culture as a *symbolic* rather than mechanistic system. Cosgrove’s (1983) statement that “the production and reproduction of material life is a collective art” (1) captures this dual sentiment well. On the one hand, new cultural geographers, approach culture as a system embedded in relations of production, i.e., in normative social orders designed to reproduce the social system. Thus, social relations shape the horizon and contours of the group and establish the normative boundaries of collective life. And yet this is not to suggest that the relationship between the material and the symbolic is one of cause and effect. As Cosgrove states, maintaining the boundaries of social life is a collective *art*, meaning that symbolic relations occupy a distinct arena of social practice. It is precisely this conception of the symbolic – as something that mediates the material rather than simply reflects it – that makes this theory of culture innovative. For new cultural geographers, the landscape is not simply a reflection of culture or an expression of cultural patterning. On the contrary, the landscape is an arena of social struggle; a site where dominant social hierarchies struggle to represent what society is and should be in our most everyday spaces. Everyday geography is the place where we, as a culture, struggle to define ourselves.

By way of closing this section, it should be noted that this balance between the material and symbolic was one that, over time, would drift apart. With the arrival of post-structural conceptions of power, (e.g., Foucault 1972), the materialism that anchored social patterns of culture came to be replaced by more variegated and open-ended notions of social and spatial control. Thus, feminist geographers (Monk and Hanson 1982, Rose 1993) illustrated how patriarchal norms explicitly (Bondi 1992, Domosh 1996, Sharp 1996) and implicitly (McDowell 1983, Nash 1994, Moss 1997) worked through everyday spatial norms while geographers of race (Kenny 1995, Peake 1993, Schein 1997) explored the ongoing legacies of white supremacy in urban planning, tourism, neighbourhood organisation and memorialisation. This work complicated geographic understandings of power in productive ways, but also undermined culture as the explanatory principal. Rather than being identified with a specific ‘people’ or ‘group’, culture came to be associated with various forms of *doxa (*Cresswell 1996); sedimented orthodoxies whose purpose is to stabilise and protect hierarchies of status (Bourdieu, 1977). The aim of the cultural geographer was to reveal these orthodoxies in our material world. The consequence of this drift was a reversion back to cultural idealism (i.e., what Williams calls a ‘whole way of life’ approach) where culture mediates itself rather than underlying material necessities (see Mitchell, 1995).[[7]](#endnote-7) Thus, the study of culture essentially becomes the study of power or, more accurately, the study of how power operates culturally. This is not to denigrate this work but to illuminate how far the culture concept strays from an interest in other people in other places.[[8]](#endnote-8)

1. *The second question of culture*

Thus far we have explored four theorists representing two distinct approaches to the question of culture in geography. Ratzel and Vidal represent the Anthropogeographical School and Sauer and new cultural geographers represent the Landscape School. While both schools understand geography to be a core element in the constitution of culture, they understand what culture is and the role geography plays in forming it, in fundamentally different ways. For the Anthropogeographical School, the question of culture is a question about habits, i.e., the ingrained everyday practices that take shape within, through and/or against distinctive environments. While the precise theoretical relation between habit and environment develops and shifts, the School as a whole represents a concern with how culture emerges from human-environmental interactions; from the process of bodies navigating an inherited material situation and the resources and constraints therein. For the Landscape School, the question of culture is about representation. Thus, the central question concerns how landscapes reflect (and in the process reinforce) internal cultural ideas, values, understandings and meanings. The interaction is not between environment and bodies but between environment and minds. Geography is the means by which culture reflects and expresses the internalised meanings and values of a community and in the process normalises those ideas within material space.

The aim of this final section is to argue that these two schools constitute two sides of the same coin. The question of culture is *both* a question of habits and a question of meaning. While on the surface this may seem like an easy thing to say (they are both right!), a second glance brings the problem into focus. These two schools do not simply represent different approaches to the question of culture, they represent fundamentally different questions. Despite using the same term, they represent different ways of approaching what the phenomenon of culture *is*. For the former, culture is a corporeal, unreflective and lived way of being while for the latter it is a cognitive, self-conscious and imaginative set of meanings. While some theorists have attempted to illustrate how analysing the former can lead to an understanding of the latter (e.g., Anderson, 2014), the question of what bodies do is essentially different from the question about how humans understand, represent and attach meaning to those doings. And I would argue that both questions need to be sufficiently addressed if the concept of culture is to have any salience or purpose. In this sense, I am arguing that the question of culture embeds two separate questions. There is a question about bodies and there is a question about meaning. And they need to be addressed separately and on their own terms.

To help clarify this dual problem of culture, I draw upon a recent commentary by Ben Anderson (2019) where he similarly (though implicitly) identifies two essential questions residing within the question of culture. The first question of culture is one that begins from “the proposition that we are involved with the world through all manner of practical (dis)connections *before* we represent the world to ourselves and others (i.e., before some act of cognitive representationalism)” (3 emphasis added). The preposition here is key. For Anderson, the question of culture starts with the recognition that bodies emerge in and through a background of material relations engendering various kinds of activities, practices and habits. The first question of culture, therefore, is essentially anthropogeographical. It is a question about bodies and how they take shape through vital interactive relations. The second question of culture explores how those relations are mediated through terminologies and ideas that give them meaning; terminologies such as experience, knowledge, power or culture. What is interesting about Anderson’s commentary is the way he identifies attempts by geographers to address a traditional domain of cultural geographic questioning (questions about experience, meaning, power etc.) but does so in a manner that does not rely upon the field’s traditional structural anchors. As he suggests, this is work that retains its focus on the processes of connection and disconnection that allow relations – between human, inhuman, non-human and other-than-human forces – to engender diverse and expanding forms of life. One example he gives is Cockayne’s (2018) article on workplace culture in the San Francisco digital media sector. Here the emphasis is not on workplace culture as an actual structuring process – i.e., something that produces ingrained pattern of socialised behaviour – but as an *idea* (the idea of ‘workplace culture’) that workers affectively attach to. Another example is the emerging work on the corporeal experience of precarity (Hitchen, 2016; Coleman, 2016) where the emphasis is on the experience of living in situations where subjects sense their capacities being diminished and worries about the future permeate the affective atmosphere of existing. In either case, Anderson illuminates work that addresses traditional geographic territory while retaining its footing in process ontologies.

To be clear, I agree with Anderson that the work he cites is trying to reconceptualise traditional cultural geographic concerns while remaining faithful to process ontologies. But I am not sure they are doing so successfully. While their questions certainly bleed into traditional cultural geographic domains (particularly in relation to questions of experience and power), it is a body of work that remains quite distant from questions of meaning, significance, attachment and investment. The reason for this, I would venture, is that there is no convincing theoretical mechanism or explanation in the literature – nor would I argue in the process theories themselves – for how habitual unreflective relations become meaningful and/or representational. For example, while I do see in Cockayne’s (2018, 2015) work a compelling theory for *how* workers become invested in the idea of workplace culture, I do not see a compelling theory of why: what drives the affective attachments that Cockayne so effectively describes?[[9]](#endnote-9) Without this explanation the second question of culture effectively becomes an extension of the first question, that is, it is a question about how habitual forms of corporeality are constituted via interactive relations. This, however, is not a question of meaning and significance. To be sure there are theoretical ideas that address the distinction between passive unreflective action and self-aware self-conscious practice – Deleuze’s (1994) conception of active and passive syntheses being the most obvious – but even here the question is about awareness rather than investment.[[10]](#endnote-10) It is a question of how bodies come to recognise or become aware of their experience, rather than how they come to invest in, attach meaning to and care for that experience as *theirs*, i.e., as something that belongs to them and is part of their identity.

This distinction between awareness and investment, as well as the problem of caring more generally, can be illuminated by a similar problematic in Heidegger’s (1962) *Being and Time*. For Heidegger, caring for one’s being – for one’s mode of existence (and the equipment residing there) in an historically bequeathed world – has two modes: authentic and inauthentic. The latter is the normal mode of existence where we mostly exist unthinkingly except when normal routines are broken or our habitual engagements are disrupted. Then we become aware of ourselves and our doings, conscious to our habits and attentive to their implications, consequences, potentialities and even limits. Authentic caring, however, happens when we are not simply aware of our world but are invested in it; that is, when we see it as ours and as something we should care for. Heidegger understands this transformation as a transition to what he terms self-ownership, a mode of caring for the world not because it is there (i.e., it is the world I know and the world from which I emerge) but because it is *mine*. While I agree there is a distinction to be made between being-in-the-world and caring-for the world (indeed it mirrors the one I am making between ‘culture as bodies-habits’ and ‘culture as meaning-representation’), the mechanism Heidegger uses to move the subject from the former to the latter is unconvincing. As Dreyfus (1990) puts it, if we presume that the origin of being is the world itself and that all modes of existence transpire through immediate and ongoing relations with that world, then by what means does Dasein come to stand outside that world, see it from afar and make choices about its relevance and meaning? While Heidegger explains this transition through his notion of being-towards-death, Dreyfus argues that there is no necessary relation between Dasein witnessing its situation – i.e., understanding itself as a worldly and finite being – and coming to care for it (Haugeland, 1982). And yet contemporary process ontologies presume this relation repeatedly – i.e., that the practice of witnessing itself engenders a sense of care. We can see this most obviously in the literature on ethics. As McCormack (2003) suggests, process ontologies allow us to “energize ethics by admitting that the corporeal finitude of the human *is emergent* from a connective multiplicity” (489 my emphasis). And Roe (2017) argues that a relational approach to ethics “enables spatial imaginaries and spatial practices to be witnessed that challenge “myopic [i.e., human centred] parameters of ethical connectivity” (Whatmore, 2002: 158)” (6). While it may be the case that witnessing our relational connectivity engenders an inclination to care for the relations that constitute us, there is nothing imminent to the relations themselves that explain this instigation. Thus, we are left with the same question Dreyfus poses of Heidegger: how do bodies – as relational composites – transcend the relations that constitute it in order to witness itself as a subject, that is, as a body that does not simply exist but can potentially care?

This brings us to the problem at the heart of this paper. Given that geography has a long tradition of theorising culture both in terms of habits and in terms of meaning, how precisely do we acknowledge and retain the contemporary paradigms exploring the former, while simultaneously developing novel conceptual trajectories for engaging the latter? The response, I propose, is that the question of meaning is a question that must be tackled on its own terms. While the first question is a question about habits, practices and worlds; about how corporealities emerge and evolve through relations and dis-relations and how those processes coalesce into rhythms and assemblages, the second question is about how such assemblages come to be meaningful. And while the two questions are certainly related, there is no mechanism within the former that works to explain the latter – i.e., there is no explanation of how or why subjects come to be attached to the corporealities they embody. We cannot presume a subject invests in the world it engenders because it is *their* world. There is, in other words, a second question of culture here. Thus, in the same way that non-representational theory advanced the Anthropogeographical School – developing long-standing ideas about human-non-human relations – this paper calls for a similar advance of the Landscape School. What that advance looks like, however, cannot be covered in any detail or depth here. The purpose of this paper is simply to illustrate that the question needs to be posed if the culture concept is to be renewed. And to suggest that geography, with its distinctive theoretical tradition, is well-placed to do so.

1. *Conclusions*

The aim of this paper is two-fold. On the one hand it argues that geography has its own distinctive tradition of theorising culture. The history of geographic thought on culture has gone back and forth between exploring culture as a habitual phenomenon engendered through interactive material relations to exploring it as a representational project informed by relations of power. The first aim has been to reconstitute this tradition and illustrate its dual nature. The rationale for this reconstitution, however, was not about geography’s past but its future. In situating geography as the focal point of these two traditions, I am suggesting that it is well positioned to keep pushing questions of culture and identity into new territory. We can see how it has done this already by instigating one of the most innovative rethinks of the culture question in 80 years. With the rise of non-representational theory and the current ascendency of relational ontologies, geographers have radically reconceptualised the mechanisms by which assemblages of bodies and spaces become manifest, emerging through human non-human relations or what traditional anthropogeographers called human-environmental interactions. And yet, even as this work opened-up geography (and geographic conceptions of culture) in significant ways, many of geography’s traditional questions have been left behind. Question which also have a long legacy within the discipline.

The second aim of this paper, therefore, has been to signal the importance of geography’s second question of culture, that is, the question of meaning and investment; the question of why subjects claim the habits they embody as *theirs*. This question, I have argued, is a very different question from questions of bodies, habits and the formations of relational assemblages. While the former is about how certain modes of life and living take shape, the latter is about why subjects come to invest in those forms of life as theirs. This question is different because it is concerned with human life specifically and the forms of identity and belonging therein. There is, in other words, a question about self-possession here (Rose 2018). While subjects obviously do not care for all their habits, the phenomenon of identity is one where subjects make choices about which habits are conceptualised as their habits, the habits they care about, invest in and represent in material forms such as landscapes. Illuminating the significance of this second question of culture, its legacy in the geographical tradition and its distinctiveness from the question of bodies, habits and human-environmental assemblages, is the primary task of this paper and thus, an appropriate place to conclude. And yet I recognise that it is an unsatisfactory conclusion. As already suggested, this paper points to a project rather than performs it. There is a second question of culture that waits to be addressed and addressed in novel terms. And while I have a number of ideas about how to do this, such discussions will have to wait for further work.[[11]](#endnote-11) My aim in this project is to show that there is a second question of culture to consider and that the tradition of cultural theory in geography provides a potent legacy for addressing it.

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1. While the task of this paper is not to explain geography’s relative lack of interest in the culture question, the issue is addressed implicitly at various points. For example, the discussion of Boas (in sections 2 and 3) implies that his ambition to separate the question of culture from questions of environment is one reason the question of culture becomes the province of anthropology over human geography (see Powell 2015 and Speth 1987). In addition, the discussion of new cultural geography (section 5) implies that cultural power comes to supplant culture as a central explanatory term. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. The issue I am raising here is identical to that raised by Duncan (1980) – i.e., the long-standing tendency in the discipline to use the culture concept without properly defining it. By this I mean a lack of interest in the underlying mechanisms explaining various cultural processes and/or the ontological or epistemological structures engendering culture’s phenomenality (however that may be conceived). [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. While I am wary of the term canon for all the reasons Powell (2015) suggests, if we take his and Barry’s (2015) argument seriously – i.e., that re-reading past work is always about applying it to current dilemmas - than it could be said that this paper is a form of re-canonisation. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. It should be noted that anthropology long abandoned theorising culture on the grounds that it could not escape the inevitable reduction of culture into an object of otherness (Clifford 1988, Abu-Lughod 1991, Ortner 1999). While I think the question of caring – what I call the second question of culture – deserves consideration, the problem of reification remains salient. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. When Ratzel talks of *kultur* he does so in the sense of civilizational status or position rather than in the way we think of it now, with its association with norms, habits, traditions, ritual etc. For this reason, we will mostly avoid Ratzel’s commentaries on *kultur* in favour of his discussion of *volk*. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. It should be no surprise that the ideas we find in Ratzel and Vidal resonate with recent theoretical trends. As Malpas (2008) suggests, many of the theorists celebrated in contemporary geographical work were powerfully influenced by the anthropogeographical tradition. Heidegger was a keen reader of Vidal de la Blache (Malpas 2008) and several authors draw parallels between Deleuze and the French geographical tradition (Lindaman, 2017; Merriman, 2012). As Verne (2017) states, while “we now draw on Deleuze and Guattari, and Latour and DaLanda to inspire our apparently new and highly innovative reflections about the mobile, procedural and relational nature of spaces – all thinkers directly referring to Spinoza and Leibniz among others – hardly do we realize that it was these very same scholars that were an important influence for Ratzel [and Vidal]” (90, also see Malpas, 2012). Even as Deleuze, Latour and DeLanda conceptualise the mechanisms of human-environmental interaction differently, it is surprising how little attention is paid in geography to the distinctive geographical legacy of their ideas. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. It needs to be acknowledged that the idealist-materialist distinction remained a matter of some debate with some authors conceptualising culture as rooted in relations of production (Mitchell 1995, McDowell 1983), while others using it to characterise a range of hierarchical social relations (Rose 1993, Valentine 1996, Cresswell 1996, Schein 1997). [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Another consequence is an empirical focus on home-cultures (the UK and America) at the expense of other parts of the world (e.g., South America), thus reinforcing a trend towards studying the normative hierarchies of white, middle-class, Western hetero-normative men. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Cockayne’s (2015) draws on Berlant (2011) to argue that affective attachment to work (a subject’s passion or love of work) explains workplace identity. Such a framework provides a profoundly somatic understanding of culture as if investment is borne from a desire (or perhaps need) for a certain kind of affective experience. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. For more on the distinction between being aware and being invested see Rose (2018). [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Elsewhere I have discussed the phenomenon of investing in one’s own world (as *my* world) as *claiming* (Rose 2018, 2012). While I have yet to develop this argument in relation to the concept of culture, this paper lays the groundwork for just such a position. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)