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Nazi topographies, geographical imaginations, and *Lebensraum*

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The Nazi *Weltanschauung*, the Nazi “worldview,” was deeply entangled with spatiality and spatial concepts,¹ among which *Lebensraum* – that is, “living” but also “vital” space – played a particularly significant role. The Third Reich’s plans for racial and ethnic reordering of European space in fact entailed endless classifications of groups and individuals and a series of subsequent (mostly forced) movements in order to fit the population distribution into a stable, hierarchical, racial order that was at the same time biopolitical and geopolitical in nature. While the Nazi grand geographies found their key localization and materialization in the Nazi “concentrationary archipelago” of camps, they entailed a broader set of topographies spanning from the territorial to the Final Solution, from early deportation in 1938 to ghettoization, from mass shooting in Ukraine and Belarus during Operation Barbarossa to the Death Marches in the last weeks of war. All these genocidal moments were topographical, not only in the trivial sense that they happened “somewhere”;² they were intrinsically topographical because space was, at the same time, an objective and a rationale for such practices “to take place.” The Holocaust should then be contextualized within the Nazi search for territorial expansion, their quest for land to respond to the needs of a *Volk ohne Raum*, a “people with no space,” to recall the title of an influential fiction book penned in 1926 by Völkish author Hans Grimm.³ Space was also a rationale for genocide: spatial segregation in ghettos and camps “naturally” increased mortality,⁴ they were planned and managed and often integrated with the surrounding cities and regions,⁵ the related forced mobilities accurately routinized,⁶ and turned into additional occasions for torture and murder,⁷ the forests to perform and hide mass shooting.⁸

However, these “topographical imaginations” were at work in German culture decades before the rise of the Third Reich, inside and outside of academic geography, including cognate disciplines⁹ and in popular discourse,¹⁰ spreading a geographical culture that spanned from maps to comics, from propaganda to fiction.¹¹ *Lebensraum*, conceived by the Nazi ideologues as a specialized *Weltanschauung* focused on Eastern Europe, together with its “mindscapes,”¹² its literary and artistic imaginations,¹³ and its academic expertise,¹⁴ may thus be a fruitful spatial metaphor to investigate in order to gain new insights into those topographical imaginations that operated as “conditions of possibility” for the genocidal practices implemented by the Third Reich. This article thus focuses on the pivotal role played by the notion of *Lebensraum* within the Nazi spatial mindscape, and

aims at repositioning this notion at the very heart of Hitler's geographies of ordering, forced eviction, and, eventually, extermination.

The idea of *Lebensraum* has been often presented by academic geographers¹⁵ and scholars of cognate disciplines¹⁶ as key to understanding the relationship between Nazism and German *Geopolitik*. From Friedrich Ratzel's path-breaking definition, to Adolf Hitler and Heinrich Himmler's popular use of the term, passing through Rudolf Kjellen and Karl Haushofer's different readings of *Geopolitik*, the concept of *Lebensraum* is marked by complex and contradictory genealogies that deserve close investigation.¹⁷ *Lebensraum*, in the context of the German *Geopolitik*, usually referred to the idea of living space vital to the body of the German *Volk*, "the German people" understood in both socio-cultural and racial terms. Here, we suggest to approach the *Lebensraum* concept as a field of tensions between life and space, and to study its Nazi understanding as an ambivalent yet unique field in which a functionalistic geopolitical tradition coexisted with a millennial and ontological understanding of both *life* and *space*. From this perspective, the Nazi *Lebensraum* grand imagery may be read as a geo-bio-political ideology, perhaps even a spatial ontology,¹⁸ according to which life and space should have been made to match.¹⁹ The attempted realization of this perfect coincidence on the part of Nazi ideologues and high ranks, we conclude, contributed in a crucial way to produce spaces of eviction and displacement and, ultimately, genocide and annihilation.

The article is organized into three sections. First, we discuss the genealogy of *Lebensraum* in reference to the discipline of Geography and to German colonial and imperial imaginations and practices. The second section is accordingly dedicated to the "functionalist" understanding of *Lebensraum* that consolidated in the intellectual climate of the Weimar Republic: *Lebensraum* as an actual living/vital space to secure the survival and the prosperity of the German people. In this sense, Hitler's understanding of *Lebensraum* seemed entirely in line with a tradition that, on the one hand, appropriates Ratzel's and Haushofer's geographical thought – although rather problematically – as well as the actual geographies of the Wilhelmine colonial practice together with the main tenets of the longstanding *Ostforschung* (literally, research on the East); on the other hand, this understanding of *Lebensraum* responds to the topographic calculative rationalities of the Nazi state.²⁰ At the same time, as discussed in the third section, *Lebensraum* was a key expression of Nazi racialized spatial imaginations and the product of an essentially ontological relationship between *life* and *space*.²¹

This is why here we propose to move beyond the more conventional philological and historical accounts that highlight the sharp distinction between early interpretations of *Lebensraum* and its successive "application" by the Nazi regime, pervaded by biological racism.²² What this article tries to show is that "the functional" and "the ontological" understandings of *Lebensraum* converged in the Third Reich grand geographical imaginations, presenting a rather messy but powerful combination of diverse values, metaphors, meanings, and practices. This makes it difficult if not impossible to operate a distinction between *life* and *space*, between biopolitics and geopolitics, since the Third Reich incorporated *Lebensraum* by merging its duplicitous meaning, as living/vital space *and* as life-world.

Lebensraum, geography, colonialism

95 It has been fully acknowledged by now that geographers played a role in inspiring Nazi spatial plans and imaginations,²³ within which the emphasis placed on *Lebensraum* by the *Geopolitik* project²⁴ coexisted with visions of order and geometry based on “central place theory,” both part of Hitler’s grand imperialist projections.²⁵ In the English-speaking world, popular and middlebrow policy narratives have traditionally depicted geographer Karl Haushofer as the “evil genius” of Hitlerism.²⁶ This somewhat exaggerated emphasis on Haushofer’s role in the Nazi hierarchy persisted well after the end of the Second World War and projected a stigma of sorts on German *Geopolitik* and, more broadly, on geopolitics.²⁷ A critical reassessment of German political geography and geopolitics only started in the 1980s thanks to the efforts of a group of German geographers²⁸ and geographer Mark Bassin.²⁹ The relationship between geography and Nazism – and accordingly the concept of *Lebensraum* – was at the core of a new important debate about a decade later, with new contributions from both historians³⁰ and geographers.³¹ The “*Geopolitik* debate” of those years was particularly concerned with the presumed affinity (and continuity) between Ratzel’s and Haushofer’s geographies, and this latter’s influence on Rudolf Hess’s and Hitler’s spatial formulations of politics and policy.

100 Arguably, most of this literature highlights clear elements of discontinuity in how *Lebensraum* was formulated by German academic geographers and the Nazis respectively, somehow reflecting the fundamental “race contra space” perspective as presented by Bassin in his key 1987 article with the same title.³² Bassin, in fact, places particular emphasis on Ratzel’s environmental determinism and on how this vision of the relationship “man-environment,”³³ shared also by Haushofer, was irreconcilable with the Nazi obsessions with race: AQ5

115 ... the National Socialists were quite willing to acknowledge the connection of man with the environment, for this was entirely in line with the *völkish* emphasis on the rootedness of the *Volk* in the natural landscape. However, the suggestion that this relationship might be subject to inflexible laws, and involves human subjection through dependency on the environment, violated notions of the primacy of racial strength and initiative.³⁴

120 A decade later, historian David Murphy reasserted Bassin’s assessment on this discontinuity:

125 [...] the greatest discordance between geopolitical thought and Nazi policy lies in the role of race in the two respective worldviews. For geopoliticians race was important, but it always remained subordinated to space. [...] *Raum*, not *Rasse*, was at the core of their understanding of the world. For Hitler and his closest followers [...] race eclipsed all other considerations, including space. The racial restructuring of German society was at the heart of Nazi domestic policies, and race was equally central to their foreign policy.³⁵

130 While Haushofer’s influence – and indirectly Ratzel’s – appeared less important compared to how it was depicted by the American propaganda machine of the 1940s,³⁶ clear elements of structural contiguity between academic geography and what Jeffrey Herf has famously named “reactionary modernism”³⁷ have been delineated, a contiguity that had implications for the shaping of the Third Reich “geographical imaginations.”³⁸ This “rule of experts” is particularly evident in the role that *Geopolitik* and the *Ostforschung* played in connecting previous German colonial imaginations and Nazi Eastern

geographical fantasies.³⁹ Both *Geopolitik* and *Ostforschung* had their roots in nineteenth-century Germany and were not fields exclusive to the Third Reich. However, during the Weimar Republic the leading scholars of these fields (Haushofer and historian Albert Brackmann) repositioned them into the sphere of Völkish revisionism and started “working towards the Fuhrer,”⁴⁰ contributing to the Nazi propagandistic jargon and Weltanschauung.⁴¹ Geographers, in particular, having given a distinct contribution to the formulation and popularization of both *Geopolitik* and *Ostforschung*, played a key role in the continuity of these spatial imaginations and spatial strategies between the two phases of colonization: from the links between the work of Ratzel, of Ferdinand von Richthofen, and German imperialism in Namibia,⁴² to the contribution given by geographers like Albrecht Penck, Wilhelm Volz, and Karl Haushofer⁴³ in shaping a specifically colonial spatial imagination of the *Ostland*.⁴⁴

The Third Reich expansionism on the Eastern Front was indeed unique in its extremist declinations of modern biopolitics, based on a radical interpretation of racial and biological hierarchies. However, this radicalization did not happen in a void, since both Nazi biopolitics and Nazi geopolitics originated and developed within specific political, professional, and academic circles, all sharing strong concerns about some fundamental issues associated to Germany’s place in the world: Versailles’ humiliating impositions, the diaspora of the *Volksdeutsche* in Europe, the antagonism of other colonial powers, the relationship with Eastern Europe, and the communist threat. These circles also shared, to some extent, the belief in the potential solutions, often gravitating around ideas of a new German *Lebensraum* to be realized in Eastern Europe, of anti-communist militancy, and of a deeply rooted *Volkskörper* founded on historically remote and mythical origins. As Andrew Zimmerman has clearly demonstrated,⁴⁵ an important component of the anthropology practiced under the Wilhelmine regime was marked by an explicit racist form of anti-humanism, something strongly related to the culture driving the colonial project of the day.

Yet the point of this article is not to address the historiographical *vexata quaestio* related to continuities/contiguities between the Third Reich and the various academic, cultural, and popular movements that populated German society in the decades before Hitler’s seizure of power. The question of continuity/contiguity, in fact, concerns the *Lebensraum* debate as much as other areas of investigation, such as the relationship with Wilhelmine colonialism⁴⁶ or with German ecologism and regionalism.⁴⁷ We propose here a different take on *Lebensraum*, and read space and race as mutually constitutive terms in the bio-geopolitical imaginations pervading Nazi spatial ideologies. As noted above, often the notion of *Lebensraum* is presented as if it were subjected to different interpretations by the advocates of traditional *Geopolitik* compared to the *Völkish* interpretation given by the Nazi ideologues. In the abovementioned “race contra space” approaches, *Lebensraum* is discussed as if its two semantic components, “life” and “space,” could be considered as separate, and as if, accordingly, it were possible to think of them in a relationship crucial in determining how the term was translated into practice. This presumed separation, therefore, allowed considering *Lebensraum* as a less problematic notion when “the spatial” was the prevailing element in its interpretations; on the contrary, the genocidal practices of the Nazis could be explained by the emergence, in ideas of *Lebensraum*, of a dominant role played by the politics of “the vital,” of life, all the more expressed in pure biological racist terms.

Here, we problematize this separation, and claim that *the question of life* should be analyzed together with *the question of space*, the biopolitical together with the geopolitical, since they merged precisely in the notion of *Lebensraum* to become mutually constitutive of the Nazi grand visions of the German nation, and the related realization of a new German Man.⁴⁸ With this we do not intend to a-critically support the “continuity” thesis; quite the contrary. We rather suggest to move beyond that very debate and instead focus on the complex geopolitical and biopolitical genealogies that made Nazi understandings of *Lebensraum*, based as they were on a fundamentally racist *Weltanschauung*, part of a broader array of popular and academic discourses and practices that contributed to the formation of (German) modernity. Again, we do not imply here that all German geographers of that period promoted a racial vision of (vital) space, or that Hitler and the Nazi high ranks simply borrowed accounts of *Lebensraum* from Ratzel and Haushofer, or even that geography was the only social science involved in the formulation of this (again, vital) link between race and space.⁴⁹ Rather, the broader Nazi “*Lebensraum* ideology” was the result of the intersections and the entanglements of a series of visions, notions, and inspirations, to which the merging of *life and space* in one single term seemed to offer an ambivalent, contradictory, yet powerful set of answers:

Lebensraum was formed from the conjuncture of several limited ideologies of which migrationist colonialism was only the least diffuse and marginally most central to the aggregation that emerged. In the long run, in fact, extensions of migrationist thinking became more important within the overall structure of *Lebensraum* than migrationist colonialism itself. [...] what the formulators of *Lebensraum* did was to attach to the existing migrationist ideology a number of ideological constructions (especially agrarianism), many of which possessed some of the same social and intellectual roots as migrationist colonialism. [...] *Lebensraum*, radical agrarianism, and a number of other new aggregate ideologies were therefore in some senses parallel and related structures with similar histories and political uses, sharing some of the same intellectual elements and appealing to similar (but not identical) segments of the German public.⁵⁰

In particular, we suggest to approach the *Lebensraum* concept as a field of tensions between life and space, and to study its Nazi interpretations as an ambivalent yet unique topography in which a functionalistic, geopolitical tradition coexisted with a millennial and ontological understanding of both *life* and *space*. From this perspective, the Nazi *Lebensraum* grand imagery may be read as a *geo-bio-political dispositif*, to borrow the term from Foucault, within which life and space were supposed to identify and match with each other.⁵¹ The attempted realization of this coincidence by some key Nazi ideologues, we argue, contributed in a crucial way to produce topographies of eviction and displacement and, ultimately, genocide and annihilation.

The next section is accordingly dedicated to the “functionalist” understandings of *Lebensraum* that consolidated in the intellectual climate of the Weimar Republic: *Lebensraum* as an actual living/vital space to secure the survival and the prosperity of the German people. In this sense, Nazi *Lebensraum* ideology seems entirely in line with a longstanding tradition that responded to the calculative spatial rationalities of the Nazi state⁵² and the making of a topographical imagination about Nazi *Raum*. At the same time, as shown in the third section, *Lebensraum* was also a key concept of Hitlerism,⁵³ an expression of a radically racialized space and the product of an essentially ontological relationship

between *life* and *space*.⁵⁴ This is why here we propose to move beyond the more conventional philological and historical accounts that highlight the sharp distinction between the early interpretations of *Lebensraum* and its successive “application” by the Nazi regime, pervaded by biological racism. What we argue is that, in the Nazi grand spatial narratives, “the functional” and “the ontological” *Lebensraum* converged, presenting a powerful assemblage of diverse values, metaphors, meanings, and practices. If this is the case, then to operate in Nazi *Lebensraum* conceptualizations, a distinction between *life* and *space*, a “cut” between biopolitics and geopolitics, may prove difficult if not impossible. The Third Reich, we suggest, incorporated *Lebensraum* by merging its duplicitous meaning, as living/vital space *and* as life-world.

Functional space: *Lebensraum* as living space

But the bread that a people needs in order to live is determined by the *Lebensraum* that is available to it. A healthy people, at least, will always attempt to satisfy its needs from its own territory and land. Every other situation is sick and dangerous, even if it enables the nourishment of a people for centuries. [...] The most secure basis for the existence of a people has always been its own territory and land. [...] The growth in population could only be compensated by growth – expansion – of the *Lebensraum*. Now, however, a people’s number is variable, but the land is a constant. [...] The expansion of the land, however, is limited by the general property distribution of the world and [any change in it] is deemed a particularly revolutionary act and an exceptional process; thus, the ease with which a population can be fed stands in opposition to the exceptional difficulty of territorial alteration.⁵⁵

Within so-called “functionalistic” interpretations, *Lebensraum* was read as “living space,” as a space necessary to contain and sustain a population – turning a demographic and statistical fact into biopolitical topography. In the Nazi projections, once conquered, colonized, and planned, this living space should have offered the natural and human resources necessary to the reproduction and development of the German *Volksgemeinschaft* (the people’s community).⁵⁶ The Nazi response to the given condition of history and geography was the expansion of the Germandom “Further East” and, in particular, into Poland,⁵⁷ a kind of colonial expansion increasingly based on rural settlers, aiming at both exploiting the conquered territories and occupying them via extensive migration of German colons. These plans were inspired by a specific colonial geographical imagination centered on the idea of the existence of an underdeveloped space available “out there,” waiting to be occupied and walked over by German boots. This vision emerged in many parts of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*⁵⁸ and eventually found its most passionate and convinced interpreter in Heinrich Himmler.⁵⁹

In his posthumously published *Second Book*,⁶⁰ Hitler extensively disserts on the relationship between colonialism and *Lebensraum*. Here he considers the different strategies available to balance the (functional) relationship between population and space.⁶¹ Hitler’s favorite solution was clearly the military acquisition of new *Lebensraum*. Colonization, in his vision, was supposed to be realized by means of a bio-geopolitical process of *völkische Flurbereinigung* (racial redistribution), precisely with the aim of realizing a new *Lebensraum* for the elected *Volk ohne Raum*.

Accordingly, *Lebensraum* could only be found in the European East, where a long-standing geography of German settlements secured racial and cultural continuity with

the German *Volksgemeinschaft*. To fully appreciate the nature of these geographical imaginations – originated during the closing decades of the previous century and traveled throughout the First World War and the Weimar period to finally feed into Hitler’s geopolitical dreams – it is important to recall, as suggested by geographer Kenneth Olwig, the duplicitous meaning of the term *Raum*, which denotes “room or place,” as well as “the open absolute space of the map, upon which place is reduced to a locus in space”:⁶²

The *Raum* in *Lebensraum* was an enclosed organic room-like area, with clear links to the habitats of organisms in terrestrial nature, but it also demanded the right to expand in the infinite absolute space of the imperial map. [...] The theories of *Lebensraum* [...] reified the spatial dynamics observed in natural habitats and then extrapolated these abstracted spatial patterns to the level of the nation-state.⁶³

This duplicitous meaning also translated into the genealogies of the European “Further East” as the elected *Lebensraum* for the German *Volk*: on the one hand, the East was presented as a sort of topographic, calculable, and somewhat “empty space,” available to be colonized and put to (orderly) use; on the other, the East was a space that, within these same narratives, materialized into an almost telluric notion of place, a porous space capable of embracing and valorizing the intrinsic qualities of the German people, of being inhabited and cultivated by, and even identified with, these people’s destiny and *Kultur*.

The emergence of *Raum*

Historian Vejas Liulevicius clearly highlights the role played by geographical concepts such as *Land*, *Raum*, and *Boden* in shaping the geopolitical and colonial agenda of the Third Reich. In particular, he notes that in the process, the notion of “land,” traditionally associated to the contingency of state sovereignty, was progressively dismissed and made redundant by Nazi spatial ideology via a reconfiguration of *Raum*, conceptualized as both “space” and “soil,” this latter intended as empty, measurable, and available space, a frontier open to colonization.

the East was to be viewed more objectively and coldly, in terms of *Raum*, “space.” [...] It now seemed an undifferentiated East, a chaotic and dirty expanse where unmanageable, intrinsically backward, and unclean populations lurked, all part of some vast, threatening presence: the “Ost.” A crucial transformation was completed, as the terms of “Land und Leute,” “lands and peoples,” [...] were overthrown, while new operative terms took their place, another resonant pairing: “*Volk und Raum*,” “race and space.” “*Volk*,” now intoned to stress the term’s racial sense, reduced “foreign peoples” to carriers of unchangeable ethnic essences. Their territories, meanwhile, were no longer understood as “lands,” areas with history and internal coherence, organization, and meaning all their own. Instead, the category of *Land* was replaced by a stark, “neutral” concept of *Raum*. Emptied of historical content, *Raum* was triumphantly ahistorical, biological, and “scientific.” Empty *Raum* stretched to the eastern horizon, dotted only by scattered races. A decisive conceptual barrier was broken by this formulation of “*Volk und Raum*.” Now the lands and peoples were stripped of any legitimate claim to independent existence and stood bare as objects and numbers, resources to be exploited and exhausted.⁶⁴

Raum was thus conjugated by mainstream Nazi spatial ideology according to a dual articulation. On the one hand, *Raum* read as topography, the result of a well-established calculative and cartographic rationality. It was therefore available to and part of the related

practices of planning, management, and control. On the other hand, however, when part of Nazi *Lebensraum* projections, *Raum* was often intended as empty space open to German colonization, a space made available to a *Volk ohne Raum*, a people with no (sufficient) space, whose organic expansion was constrained by their insufficient spatial conditions.⁶⁵

The presumed and/or imagined emptiness of (others') space is indeed a trope that has traditionally characterized European colonial geographical imaginations. Robert Nelson, for example, has brought a wealth of evidence on how German colonial imaginations portraying Poland as an empty space were already populating the discourses of *inneren Kolonisation* (inner colonization) and justifying the creation of the Royal Prussian Settlement Commission in the Provinces of West Prussia and Posen in 1886, the Archive for Inner Colonization in 1908, and the Society for the Advancement of Inner Colonization in 1912 – to name three foundational moments of a longstanding process that culminated in the tensions and the malaise of the Weimar years:

This was of course a colonial fantasy of virgin land, the vacuum domicilium that the colonial gaze always seeks, and a vision constantly spoiled by the restless Poles moving throughout the German colonial landscape. [...] This colonial paradox, the realization that land was both empty and full at the same time, empty for colonizers, but full of “problem” populations, was at the heart of inner colonization.⁶⁶

The embodiment of *Raum*: *Volk, Boden, Kultur*

This rather abstract transformation of *Land* into *Raum* was matched by a move toward the materialization of these same imagined geographies. *Raum* was thus also translated into “place,” which, in the Weimarian, and eventually Nazi, spatial mythological realm took the form of soil, of German *Boden*.⁶⁷ It is in the geographies of the Weimarian *Ostforschung* that this “telluric” connotation of *Raum* first emerged. Already in 1925, geographer Albrecht Penck introduced a clear distinction between terms like *Staatsboden*, *Volksboden*, and *Kulturboden* in his influential essay “*Deutscher Volks- und Kulturboden*,”⁶⁸ all categories further developed by another mainstream geographer, Wilhelm Volz.

The theoretical concept of the German *Volks und Kulturboden* (*Boden*, “soil”) contained three different “territories”: first, the German Reich, in principle within the state borders; second, the German *Volks-Boden* (“ethnic territory”), a wider area mainly settled by German people; and third, the *Kultur-Boden* (“cultural area”), an even wider area, where German cultural influence in the broadest sense was predominant. The latter stood in marked contrast to the actual political frontiers. It was of fundamental importance to geographical research until 1945.⁶⁹

From Penck's standpoint, the German “cultural soil” in Eastern Europe was “characterized by an extremely careful form of cultivation which does not grind to a halt when it encounters difficulties.”⁷⁰ Moreover, Penck argued that “the German cultural landscape does not result from the interaction of various natural causes, but is the work of people with definite natural abilities, who change nature according to their wills.”⁷¹ This statement has important implications for our main argument. The topographical notion of *Raum* is here accompanied and complemented by a cultural notion of *Boden* that goes well beyond the state territory. If this cultural definition makes it particularly difficult to identify the actual German *Boden* in its tripartite articulation, at the same time its ambivalence allows us to think of it as a spatial body constantly remade through a set

of variable topographies, a space therefore open to the expansionist projections of the Third Reich. In other words, if the *Volksboden* and the *Kulturboden* were of a different nature compared to the contingent realities of the *Staatsboden*, it was inevitable for the German *Volk* to go beyond the borders of the German state in order to make their *Lebensraum* finally coincide with their *Volksboden* and *Kulturboden*.

Accordingly, *Volksboden* and *Kulturboden* were conceived as spatial “bodies” in relation to the *longue durée* of a people, a trajectory of historical continuity where past and present were supposed to become one and the same. Wilhelm Volz, deliberately drawing from Penck’s work, explained that “the soil has been Teutonic-German *Volksboden* for 3000 years” and that “already in the 10th century the German resettlement begins. Higher German *Kultur* triumphed over primitive Slavdom; there Germans wrested massive areas of new settlement land from the primeval forest.”⁷²

These readings somehow resuscitated the mythical temporalities of the medieval colonization of Eastern Europe on the part of the Teutonic Knights, a temporality explicitly recalled by the Nazi Freikorps fighters first⁷³ and Himmler later;⁷⁴ these temporalities ended up also inspiring the medieval model of colonization of the “Eastern Lands”⁷⁵ celebrated in particular by economist and urban planner Gottfried Feder in his influential writings.⁷⁶ For the Nazis, this historical continuity based on the idea of *Kulturboden* was essentially racial and vitalistic in nature. Even Hitler, in his critique of past German colonialism, explicitly mentioned the necessary link between the culture and the life of a *Volk*:

Now, it was noteworthy that especially in the nineteenth century, a general pull toward colonization affected all peoples; the original governing idea, however, had already given way completely. Germany, for example, justified its right to colonize with its competence and its desire to disseminate German culture. This is nonsense. Because one cannot transmit culture, which is a general expression of the life of a certain people, to any other people with a completely different mindset.⁷⁷

The impossibility of “transmitting culture” for Hitler and his closest ideologues was due to the essentially different “racial quality” of the various people, and to the fundamental purity and health of their collective body. In this way, Hitlerism marked a first bifurcation between the Nazi understanding of *Lebensraum* and the context in which this very idea originated and was made popular. Consequently, for Himmler, the Nazi project “in the East is not germanization in the former sense of the term, that is, imposing German language and laws upon the population, but to ensure that only people of pure German blood inhabit the East.”⁷⁸

Such a vision then goes well beyond the functionalist interpretation of *Lebensraum* described above that was popular during the previous decades not only in Germany but also in the United States and the rest of Europe.⁷⁹ Hitler’s *Lebensraum*, while having been somehow prepared by long-term tropes of racial and cultural difference translated into geopolitical projections in the preceding decades, incorporated at the same time something entirely new and different.

Ontological space: *Lebens-Raum* as life-world

Our demand for strengthening the basic racial principles of our *Volk* [...] is also the determining factor in all of the aims of National Socialist domestic and foreign policy. Once we

410 have succeeded in purging and regenerating our *Volk*, foreign countries will very soon realize that they are confronted with a different *Volk* from hitherto. And thus the prerequisites will be given for putting our own land and soil in thorough order and securing the life of the nation on our own for long years to come. [...] if the German peasant, the foundation and life source of our *Volk*, is saved, then the entire nation will once again be able to look ahead to the future with confidence.⁸⁰

415 In the Nazi progression toward total mobilization and war, soil, culture, and race ended up inhabiting, so to speak, the same ontological field, and substantially merged. Therefore, to appreciate the deeply biopolitical foundation of mainstream Nazi *Lebensraum* ideology, it is useful to depart from its most conventional functionalist interpretations, and approach it “ontologically,” as a “life-world,” as a condition of being (of the Arian being) projected toward the actual coming together of (German) life and space. As observed, again, by Olwig: AQ7 ▲

420 *Raum* became diabolic in a way that would not have occurred if its use were more clearly understood to be symbolic. A symbol is something that is understood to stand for something else, as when the pattern on the colored material of the flag, or the chorographic pattern outlined on the map, stands for the abstract notion of the nation. This becomes problematic, however, when the symbolic representation becomes confounded with the abstract represented. [...] The Second World War was, of course, to a certain extent the outcome of an attempt to make the boundaries of the German state conform to the space of this map, which transcended the complex of places, with varying ethnic identities, that made up the territory within its spatial boundaries.⁸¹

Life-world

430 In order to examine the deeper biopolitical nature of the link between space and life as established by Nazi ideology and spatial practice, it is helpful to engage with the distinction introduced by historian Boaz Neumann, between *Lebensraum* intended as “living space” and *Lebens-Raum* as “life-world.”⁸² This distinction in fact allows us to read the Nazi formulation of *Lebensraum* as the unique coming together of two bio-geopolitical visions: the first, topographical, produced and implemented by German colonialism; the second, driven by a millennial, ontological interpretation of the term/concept. Hitler himself seemed to assume in his writings the need for a necessary coincidence between “the spatial” and “the biological”: “[w]hat we desire is [...] our freedom, our security, the securing of our *Lebensraum*. It is the securing of our *Volk*’s life itself.”⁸³

440 For Neumann, we should therefore engage with the existence of a Nazi biopolitical *Weltanschauung*.⁸⁴ The language of Nazism, he argues, did not only translate ideology into symbols and metaphors, but was an eminent manifestation of a *Weltanschauung* directly linked to a related life experience,⁸⁵ and in particular to *Anschauung*, the act of seeing: “whereas the activity of mind is based on ideas, *Anschauung* enables one to experience life as a living experience.”⁸⁶ Accordingly, the *Volkskörper* should not be understood as a mere biopolitical metaphor denoting an organic conceptualization of the state and the nation, but rather:

450 the *Volkskörper* in the Nazi *Weltanschauung* should be viewed as the manifestation of an actual, concrete body. [...] The Nazi corporeal ontology did not rest on the individual’s body, since such a body was vulnerable to biological “whim.” The individual body was one that invariably decayed. The Nazi corporeal ontology was based, instead, on a body

that did not degenerate. This was the *Volkskörper*, whose existence was autonomous of this or that specific body. The *Volkskörper* was manifested in the Nazi *Weltanschauung* as a result of corporeal catastrophe and trauma.⁸⁷

In other words, life and race stopped being considered as mere biological categories. They became spatio-ontological ones.⁸⁸ If the *Volkskörper* was in need of care and prosthesis,⁸⁹ its very scars and amputations/mutilations were *in primis* spatial: “Filled with the conviction that the causes of this collapse lie in internal injury to the body of our *Volk*, the government of the national revolution aims to eliminate the afflictions from our national life that would, in future, continue to foil any real recovery.”⁹⁰

The illness of the German body politic was indeed mainly expressed as the result of the penetration operated by alien bodies, of border violations of this real-and-imagined German bio-geopolitical space. Sandra Mass describes this identification between the individual body and the people’s body, between the individual space and the spaces of the *Volk*:

The obsession with interracial sexuality and the sexualized language by which acts of rape and non-respectable sexuality were described, were found in the semantic and allegorical analogies appearing in speeches made about the threatened *Volkskörper*. The “humiliation” of the nation was described in anatomical metaphors. The assault on the female body in the texts therefore metonymically stood for the political situation and the generally prevalent idea of crisis and threat. The Versailles Treaty was interpreted as a ripping apart of the community, as a “shameful rape,” where the loss of certain German territories was compared to “the foreign powers tearing pieces out of the body of the German Reich.” [...] With the allegorical representation of the “raped nation” and the reference to the “tearing away of pieces of the national body,” the propagandists combined images of individual and collective bodies and connected them with the loss of *Raum* in the West.⁹¹

According, again, to Neumann, “once space was conceived as a real organic body, the Polish Corridor, established by the Treaty of Versailles to separate East Prussia from the rest of Germany, could be considered a ‘bleeding wound,’ and the ‘Versailles Diktat’ a cause of ‘bleeding borders.’”⁹² In this vein, for example, in 1927 Haushofer paralleled the loss of German territory to an “unhealed burns in the outer skin of the *Volkskörper*,”⁹³ while just two years later Goebbels described the Treaty of Versailles as “an open, bleeding, life-threatening wound on the Körper of the German *Volk*.”⁹⁴ This (spatial) “subjection to injuries” was aggravated by the growing urbanization:

In the metropolis, the adherents of *Raum* discovered the interface where space clearly displayed a pathology of its own, manifesting itself as an organic force which might be healthy or unhealthy and whose configuration had a drastically damaging biological impact upon its human inhabitants. Exposure to the urban *Raum*, many believed, produced dangerous political effects as well. [...] The conviction that the urban *Raum* constituted a geomedical danger for German political and racial survival was one that its adherents were able to convey to a broad public in a number of venues during the interwar era.⁹⁵

The coincidence between life and space had thus to be conceived as “total,” and essentially ontological in nature: Germany was to be thought “not only as an organism in *Raum*, but in much deeper sense as a spatial organism grown out of *Raum*.”⁹⁶ Neumann finally claims that the Nazi “notion of *Lebensraum* was not of a living space, but a life-world. Its role was not to provide the resources necessary for maintaining life: it was the expression of life itself.”⁹⁷ For mainstream Nazi spatial ideology, *Volkskörper* and *Lebensraum* therefore

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ought to perfectly and immediately coincide, to establish a relationship of identity with no remnants or gaps, a life-world ontologically founded on a specific millennial vision of life.

500 **Blut und Boden**

Such an ontological approach to *Lebens-Raum* was also clearly expressed by the Nazis' belief in the need for absolute coincidence between ideology (to be experienced, indeed, as an ontology) and practice,⁹⁸ and in the related rhetoric of *Blut und Boden* (literally "blood and soil"), that is, "the idea that a necessary affinity existed between the optimal exploitation of a certain type of natural environment and a certain pure racial type."⁹⁹ The ideology of *Blut und Boden* in fact elided the abovementioned threshold between life and space: while blood, understood as a biological and racial fact, materialized life in the body politic of the German nation and in each of its members, the notion of soil turned abstract ideas of space into actual spatial practices.

The ideology of *Blut und Boden*, like that of *Lebensraum*, was also characterized by a complex genealogy that preceded and went beyond its reception by Nazi mainstream propaganda. According to Hau,¹⁰⁰ its origin refers back to the *Lebensreform* movement at the end of the nineteenth century; a movement concerned with the popularization of healthy practices like nudism and vegetarianism, and more in general with an idealized "return" to rural life and its related values, as opposed to urbanization and its cosmopolitan cultures. In particular, *Blut und Boden* values gained full recognition within agrarianist movements like the Artaman League emerging in the 1920s as part of the German Youth Movement, in which both Heinrich Himmler and Walter Darré were involved.¹⁰¹ Darré was indeed a key figure in promoting the symbiotic relationship between blood and soil, between life and space, biopolitics and geopolitics. For Clifford Lovin, "Darré felt that the Nordic race was superior and that one of the chief reasons was its closeness to the soil. And he believed that the race had another principal source of primacy in its biological makeup or, as he put it, in the purity of the blood."¹⁰²

525 According to David Woodruff Smith, it was precisely with the notion of *Blut und Boden* that the merging of the racial and the spatial into the Nazis' bio-geopolitics was initiated:

The basic assumptions of *Lebensraum* ideology focused on culture and environment, not race. Both intellectually and in terms of constructing a politically effective argument, the functional link between *Lebensraum* and biological racism was made in the 1920s. [...] In the 1920s, it became customary to argue that both genetic and environmental factors played significant roles in the composition of a *Volk* and that the true German *Volk* could not survive and prosper without a national policy that took account of both. The physical and mental strength of the Germanic race lay in its unusual ability to realize its full potential through interaction with nature in a challenging rural environment. [...] Races such as the Slavs and the Jews, for example, were unsuited to efficient individual peasant farming and could not, even under the best of circumstances, play their proper, biologically determined roles in such a setting.¹⁰³

540 The contact with and the related rooting in the *Boden* is what produced and allowed for the purity of the German *Volk*. At the same time, the biological elements rooted in the German *Kultur* is what made it capable of transforming uncultivated land into a genuine German *Boden*, infused with the genetic "qualities" of the German people.¹⁰⁴ "it was not state borders but the capacity of a race to etch its culture into the land that

provided the decisive justification of ownership.”¹⁰⁵ This was, crucially, the cultural context in which the specifically Himmlerian geopolitical imaginary took shape, including the figure of the soldier-peasant (*Wehrbauer*), and the related involvement of SS corps in the colonization of the occupied Eastern European territories.¹⁰⁶

545 It is precisely because of this “organic interrelationship of *Blut, Boden* and *Raum*”¹⁰⁷ that biopolitics and geopolitics, in the Nazi context, should not be considered as two separate and distinct phenomena/processes, simply intersecting and overlapping in their spatial practices. They should instead be treated as two fundamentally indistinguishable dimensions of the same bio-spatial ontologies, manifestations of the same life-world in which life and space had to *topographically coincide*, with no gaps, no leftovers. These bio-spatial ontologies, for Hitler and an influential cohort of Nazi racial experts, were deeply rooted into a form of radical immanent worldview, of a true “evolutionary ethics.”¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, concepts and ideas did not have their own life, separate and distinct from a specific *Volkskörper* who incorporated them in an equally specific space. As noted by historian Richard Weikart,¹⁰⁹ for Hitler, all human ideas – including ethical ideas – were necessarily tied to human existence. If those humans who uphold a particular idea – whether all of humanity or just one race – perish, their ideas vanish with them: “My Movement, as an expression of will and yearning, encompasses every aspect of the entire *Volk*. It conceives of Germany as a corporate body, as a single organism. There is no such thing as non-responsibility in this organic being, not a single cell which is not responsible, by its very existence, for the welfare and well-being of the whole.”¹¹⁰

560 As a consequence, in this life-world ideas and practices were inevitably and biologically determined by race: “as the burgeoning literature on Nazi eugenics has shown [...] Hitler (and many other Nazis) did not draw such a dichotomy between biology and behavior.”¹¹¹ In the framework of Hitlerism, race, space, *Weltanschauung*, and practice/behavior coincided – or should have coincided – since all the gaps among them ought to be eliminated. In the Nazi imperial projections – driven as they were by the realization of a new German *Lebensraum* – race and space were so tightly entangled, practically and functionally, that they ended up promoting spatial and political conditions in which racism and colonialism, biopolitics and *Geopolitik*, mutually constituted and alimented each other. These entanglements, taken to their extreme consequences by the radical implementation of a set of related policies in the newly colonized Eastern European lands, soon turned *Lebensraum* into a landscape of genocide. What is more, in the Nazi “triumph of *Raum*” – to speak with Liulevicius – of German racialized expansionism, were already present the roots of the collapse and defeat of the Nazi millennial projections – the result of the obsession with space and race that decisively marked the grand visions of the Nazi highest ranks, including Hitler and Himmler:

580 The regime used modern techniques for the goal of a terrible future utopia which classical modernity would not recognize, seeking space, rather than development. While the Soviets retreated, “trading space for time,” the Nazis gave up time to gain space – seeking an everlasting, timeless present of destructive expansion in their vision of the Ostland. As the tide of events turned in the East, Hitler refused to give up the spaces conquered and forbade withdrawal again and again, producing military disasters. The ideological primacy of *Raum* was fatal in its consequences in the East. At long last, this was brought home to Germans as the Red Army invaded their territory by 1945, turning the utopia of *Raum* into a nightmare of the advancing East.¹¹²

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Coda

In this article we have briefly discussed the debate on the continuities between the original conception of the idea of living/vital space and the Nazi notion of *Lebensraum*, as a way to approach the constellation of conceptual genealogies that made the Nazi colonial ideology possible and largely supported by the German people – an ideology, we have argued, driven by a set of geographical metaphors and spatial theories and practices, and supported by some prominent geographers. Our guiding argument is somehow in line with mainstream interpretations claiming that the Nazi *Lebensraum* was marked by biological racist overtones that were not present in earlier formulations normally attributed to Ratzel and Haushofer. The same may be said for the notion of *Boden* as conceived by the *Blut und Boden* ideology and embraced by, among many others, Darré and Himmler. *Boden* was a far more “biological” notion compared to those of *Volksboden* and the *Kulturboden* proposed by geographers like Penck and Volz. However, at the same time, we resist interpretations that identify a clear and fundamental break between the work of these geographers and the production of Nazi spatial ideologies, that is, in line with the “race contra space” argument as discussed above.

Accordingly, we have suggested that the distinction between *Lebensraum* as a functionalist living space and *Lebens-Raum* as ontological life-world should be read at one time diachronically and synchronically. Diachronically, since the merging of Nazi spatial ideology and practice was the result of a sort of progressive escalation, mainly due to war developments that crucially transformed the meaning of *Lebensraum* in the framework of Hitlerism. Synchronically, because *Lebens-Raum* as a concept was entirely permeated by the actual *Raum* of Eastern Europe, exactly like *Kultur-Boden* always permeated the elaboration of *Blut und Boden* theories and practices. Many populist grand claims from Hitler and other Nazi ideologues reveal a clear tension between functionalist and ontological interpretations of *Lebensraum*, coexisting with and coming across that (often confused and incoherent) coagulation of ideas and practices that made the Nazi spatial ideology and practice as we know them. Indeed, by the moment in which it became a sort of conceptual *paspartout* for a series of rather diverse aspirations, perceptions, and imaginations, the idea of *Lebensraum* could not be contained anymore within the confines of academic discussion of *Geopolitik*. It was in fact incorporated in very popular geopolitical fantasies fueled by the propaganda of the regime, to become part of the genocidal topographical machinery that attempted to produce a perfected millennial *Endreich* – a Reich in which life and space were supposed to fully coincide in the violent materializations of the rather confused but nonetheless powerfully implemented Nazi geo-biopolitical ontologies that we have tried to unravel here.

Notes

1. Giaccaria and Minca, *Hitler's Geographies*.
2. Giaccaria and Minca, “Topographies/Topologies of the Camp.”
3. Smith, “Friedrich Ratzel and the Origins of *Lebensraum*.”
4. See Cole, *Holocaust City*; Cole, *Traces of the Holocaust*.
5. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*.
6. Sofsky, *The Order of Terror*.
7. Blatman, *The Death Marches*.

8. Giaccaria and Minca, "Nazi Biopolitics."
9. Chiantera-Stutte, "Space, Großraum and Mitteleuropa."
10. Smith, *The Ideological Origins*.
11. Herb, *Under the Map of Germany*.
12. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*.
- 635 13. Kopp, *Germany's Wild East*.
14. Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*.
15. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Bassin, "Blood or Soil?"; Heske, "Karl Haushofer"; Herb, "Persuasive Cartography"; Herb, *Under the Map of Germany*.
- 640 16. Smith, "Friedrich Ratzel and the Origins of *Lebensraum*"; Smith, *The Ideological Origins*; Murphy, *The Heroic Earth*; Murphy, "A Sum of the Most Wonderful Things"; Diner, "Knowledge of Expansion"; Herwig, "Geopolitik."
17. Abrahamsson, "On the Genealogy of '*Lebensraum*'."
18. Minca, "Carl Schmitt."
19. Giaccaria and Minca, "Topographies/Topologies of the Camp"; Giaccaria and Minca, "Nazi Biopolitics."
- 645 20. Elden, "National Socialism and the Politics of Calculation."
21. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life."
22. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Bassin, "Blood or Soil?"; Murphy, *The Heroic Earth*; Abrahamsson, "On the Genealogy of '*Lebensraum*'."
23. Rössler, "Applied Geography and Area Research"; Wolf, "The East as Historical Imagination."
24. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Bassin, "Blood or Soil?"
- 650 25. Barnes and Minca, "Nazi Spatial Theory"; Barnes and Clayton, "Continental European Geographers."
26. Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*.
27. Troll, "Geographic Science in Germany."
28. Mullin, "The Impact of National Socialist Policies"; Heske, "Karl Haushofer"; Fahlbusch, Rössler, and Siegrist, "Conservatism, Ideology and Geography"; Herb, *Under the Map of Germany*; Olwig, "The Duplicity of Space"; Kost, "The Conception of Politics"; Rössler, "Applied Geography and Area Research."
- 655 29. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Bassin, "Imperialism and the Nation State"; Bassin, "Blood or Soil?"
30. Diner, "Knowledge of Expansion"; Kallis, *Fascist Ideology*; Danielsson, "Creating Genocidal Space."
- 660 31. Kost, "Anti-Semitism in German Geography"; Wolkersdorfer, "Karl Haushofer and Geopolitics"; Natter, "Geopolitics in Germany"; Natter, "Friedrich Ratzel's Spatial Turn."
32. See also Blackburn, "The Conquest of Nature."
33. Ibid.
34. Bassin, "Race Contra Space," 126.
35. Murphy, *The Heroic Earth*, 247.
- 665 36. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics*.
37. Herf, *Reactionary Modernism*.
38. On this see, among others, Fahlbusch, Rössler, and Siegrist, "Conservatism, Ideology and Geography"; Herb, *Under the Map of Germany*; Olwig, "The Duplicity of Space"; Rössler, "Applied Geography and Area Research"; Sandner and Rössler, "Geography and Empire in Germany"; Barnes and Minca, "Nazi Spatial Theory"; Wolf, "The East as Historical Imagination."
- 670 39. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 253–6.
40. Kershaw, *Hitler 1889–1936*.
41. Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*.
42. See Danielsson, "Creating Genocidal Space"; also Zimmerer, "In Service of Empire."
43. Hagen, "Mapping the Polish Corridor"; Wolf, "The East as Historical Imagination."
- 675 44. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*.
45. Zimmerman, *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany*.

46. Zimmerer, "Colonialism and the Holocaust"; Zimmerer, "The Birth of the Ostland"; Fitzpatrick, "The Pre-history of the Holocaust?"
47. Brüggemeier, Cioc, and Zeller, *How Green Were the Nazis?*
48. Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich*.
49. See, for example, Stone, "White Men with Low Moral Standards?"; Penny and Bunzl, *Worldly Provincialism*.
50. Smith, *The Ideological Origins*, 84.
51. Giaccaria and Minca, "Topographies/Topologies of the Camp"; Giaccaria and Minca, "Nazi Biopolitics."
52. Elden, "National Socialism and the Politics of Calculation."
53. Levinas, "Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism."
54. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life."
55. Hitler, *Hitler's Second Book*, 16.
56. Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide*.
57. Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*.
58. Musiedlak, "L'espace totalitaire d'Adolf Hitler."
59. Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler*.
60. Hitler, *Hitler's Second Book*.
61. *Ibid.*, 19–27.
62. Olwig, "The Duplicity of Space," 13.
63. *Ibid.*, 3, 14.
64. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 252.
65. Bassin, "Race Contra Space"; Bassin, "Imperialism and the Nation State."
66. Nelson, *Germans, Poland, and Colonial Expansion*, 72, 75.
67. Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, 25–31; Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 255.
68. Heske, "Karl Haushofer."
69. Rössler, "Geography and Area Planning," 62.
70. Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, 26.
71. *Ibid.*
72. Volz, 1926, in Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastwards*, 28.
73. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 234–5.
74. Longerich, *Heinrich Himmler*, 273.
75. Mullin, "The Impact of National Socialist Policies."
76. Schenk and Bromley. "Mass-Producing Traditional Small Cities"; Hagen, "Mapping the Polish Corridor."
77. Hitler, *Hitler's Second Book*, 162.
78. Himmler, in Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 268.
79. Kühl, *The Nazi Connection*; Stone, "White Men with Low Moral Standards?"; Turda and Weindling, *Blood and Homeland*.
80. Hitler, 1933, in Domarus, *The Essential Hitler's Speeches and Commentaries*, 321–2.
81. Olwig, "The Duplicity of Space," 4.
82. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life," 112, 115.
83. Hitler, in Domarus, *The Essential Hitler's Speeches and Commentaries*, 161.
84. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life," 109.
85. Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*.
86. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life," 117.
87. Neumann, "The Phenomenology of the German People's Body," 154, 156.
88. Neumann, "The National Socialist Politics of Life," 121.
89. Neumann, "Being Prosthetic in the First World War."
90. Hitler, in Domarus, *The Essential Hitler's Speeches and Commentaries*, 225.
91. Mass, "The 'Volkskörper' Fear," 237–8.
92. *Ibid.*, 167.
93. *Ibid.*, 235.
94. Neumann, "The Phenomenology of the German People's Body," 158.

95. Murphy, “A Sum of the Most Wonderful Things,” 126.
 96. Maull 1925, in Murphy, “A Sum of the Most Wonderful Things,” 124.
 97. Neumann, “The National Socialist Politics of Life,” 115.
 98. *Ibid.*, 109.
 99. Smith, *The Ideological Origins*, 243.
 100. Hau, “The Holistic Gaze in German Medicine.”
 101. Bramwell, *Blood and Soil*.
 102. Lovin, “*Blut und Boden*.”
 103. Smith, *The Ideological Origins*, 212–13.
 104. Weiss, *The Nazi Symbiosis*.
 105. Blackbourn, “The Conquest of Nature,” 158.
 106. Neumann, “The National Socialist Politics of Life,” 112.
 107. Pinwinkler, “Volk, Bevölkerung, Rasse, and Raum.”
 108. Weikart, *Hitler’s Ethic*, 2–16.
 109. *Ibid.*, 45.
 110. Hitler, in Domarus, *The Essential Hitler’s Speeches and Commentaries*, 171–2.
 111. Weikart, *Hitler’s Ethic*, 88.
 112. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front*, 272.

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