1 State, Territory, and Boundaries: A General Discussion

> The land should be large enough to support a certain number of people living moderately and no more.
>
> *The Laws of Plato*, Book V, § 737

The ability to link a particular territory to one particular group is essential to the definition of the modern nation-state. Does this mean that a particular territory associated with one national group will have clear and precise boundaries? This question raises the complexity of the relationships among "nation-state," "territory," and "boundaries." Other characteristics of the nation-state—a common heritage or a common language, for example—often breed territorial fluidity and indistinct boundaries between states and peoples. The territorial identity of the nation-state is such a new phenomenon that, according to recent research, even France—perhaps the model of a territorial nation-state—became one only in the middle of the nineteenth century and not in the revolution of 1789.[1] A deeper complication is the question of the territorial motivation of individuals and communities. Is the territorial behavior of people analogous to that of animals, that is, essentially instinctive? What indeed is the function of territory?

Territorial Behavior

The territorial instinct of certain animals, including the need to set boundaries, is one of the main research interests of ethology, the study of the biology of behavior, particularly the comparative study of animal behavior.[2] Human ethology examines these behavioral patterns among humans. Although the subject is fascinating, findings are not conclusive about the motivations or patterns of human

territorial activity. There is consensus among ethologists that territoriality among some animals is inherited and instinctive, but generalizations about territoriality are not clear for animals at a higher level of development. "Pure" territoriality exists, for example, among lower primates, while those that are more developed—such as chimpanzees and baboons—have no group-protected territory.[3]

Empirical studies about the territorial behavior of humans as individuals and in groups are still few and relatively new. Some literature speculates that human territorialism is instinctive, and expressed in violence and belligerence, which is intended to ensure identity and defense.[4] But applying research conclusions about animal behavior to the behavior of humans is not possible, also because we still lack evidence and a clear understanding of human territorial behavior.[5] In general, the existence of an inherited "territorial imperative" among humans that is rooted in their evolutionary past and that dictates their drive to control or defend territory has not yet been proven.

Critics of the popular approach point out the lack of evidence that human territorial behavior is homologous to that of animals.[6] Most ethologists maintain that despite the superficial similarity, the needs that human territoriality is intended to satisfy are on an entirely different evolutionary plane (and not just "higher"), such as self-identity, prestige and status, and the desire for accomplishment and reward.[7] In collective human behavior, the analogy to animals is almost entirely obscured by the fact that communities and nations compete mainly for power, of which territorial control is just one component, and occasionally only instrumental at that. For example, human communities have proven that they are capable of relinquishing territory not only to survive, but also to attain other common goals such as social homogeneity or economic advantage.[8] Moreover, the individualism of the modern human being is clearly a "deviation" from territorial determinism.

This short discussion about human territorial behavior raises the question of causal relations in the role of territory. Let us set aside this question at the level of the individual, and begin to focus on the various approaches concerning peoples and states.

The Roles of Territory

"Geography does not argue, it simply is," noted Spykman to emphasize the influence of geography on the state.[9] This approach may lead to "geographical determinism," according to which human

events, or at least political events between states, are no more than an accumulation of geographical facts. A particular territory forms a particular community, and this relationship is therefore the primary explanation for what transpires inside the community and in its external behavior. Interestingly, some determinists actually invert the order of the causal explanation. Fichte, for example, argued that "it is not because men dwell between certain mountains and rivers that they are a people, but on the contrary, men dwell together . . . because they were a people already by a law of nature which is much higher."[10]

In the same way, the claim that boundaries between states must coincide with linguistic maps turns common language, and not necessarily common territory, into the main factor behind the formation of the nation-state. All these approaches strive for an objective standard, or a natural law, to explain how the relationship develops between a human community and territory. The other approach is entirely opposite: "The territory is a physical manifestation of the state's authority, and yet allegiance to territory or homeland makes territory appear as a source of authority."[11]

Here, territory is entirely passive, and it becomes a motivating and activating factor only through human beliefs and actions. Therefore, territory in the modern state has a specific function: the expression of political power, the control of access to distinguish between the included and the excluded, the determination of social relations defined as citizenship, and the conduct of international relations according to territorial partitions between states. This approach bestows on territory a central role in collective behavior while eliminating most of its emotional content. Land becomes a natural endowment, a resource like any other, and not the homeland, fatherland, or motherland.

But what about the well-known subjective element in the territorial behavior of peoples and states? Can it be viewed simply as the legitimization of other needs, as a means for attaining other goals? We know that peoples identify with a particular territory and even imbue it with their national and cultural essence, past and future.[12] For this reason, this book separates the collective roles of territory into two categories. This first is the emotional attachment of people who relate to territory as an inseparable part of their individual and collective identity and therefore also of the nation. The second is the functional orientation of people who relate to territory as a means of satisfying defined needs rooted in culture, society, and politics. The first approach, when distilled, is reminiscent of the "territorial imperative" argument, whereas the

second approach, when it views territory solely as a device for advancing other needs, ignores its symbolic and emotional significance, thus exaggerating its functionalism.[13]

The approach adopted in this book is based on Gottmann, who refused to create iron-clad rules of motivation, but recognized the duality in the attachment to territory "as a geographical expression both of a social function and of an institution rooted in the psychology of people."[14] It stems from this that emotional needs and functional needs abide together. We cannot ignore them—nor the internal tension between them—when analyzing territorial decisions. This dualism can be found in the arguments expressed as well as in concrete positions adopted in territorial decision making.

Gottmann also points out the varied meanings attributed by various disciplines to *territory.*[15] Politicians view territory mainly in terms of population and resources; the military, as topography dictating tactical and strategic considerations; jurists, as a matter of legal jurisdiction; experts in international law, as an expression of sovereignty and its spatial enforcement; whereas to geographers, territory is part of an expanse defined by boundaries for specific purposes. All these meanings are relevant for the analysis of political decisions in territorial matters. We will disregard the question of individual motivations in territorial behavior and focus solely on the collective aspect of the territorial problem, an issue that also encompasses the role of territory in defining the meaning of the state.

Territory and the State

The state, like territory, is simultaneously tangible (passport control at borders) and intangible (a symbol and an object of identification).[16] We will posit, therefore, that a state's claim to sovereignty over a particular territory reflects these two components: an expressive manifestation and an instrumental manifestation of the needs of a particular collective.

In most definitions, the existence of the state depends on government, population, and territory; that is, on the state's ability to maintain social order within a community designated by territorial boundaries. MacIver's four theories of the state will serve as the basis for our examination of the territorial implications of each definition:[17]

1. *The state as a power system.* State power means principally the monopolistic use of coercive force to ensure social order.

2. *The state as a social contract.* The contract is based on natural rights and the free will of individuals in society. Hence the state is a result of an agreement based on the will of the people to pursue common goals.
3. *The state as a unity.* The state is analogous to a living organism with its own laws of survival, distinct "personality," self-consciousness, and even separate will. When this unity appears in a particular community, an internal bond is created between the state and the nation.
4. *The state as an "association."* The state is a normative arrangement that establishes a legal entity for specific purposes of the civil society. It is therefore an artificial organization (not found in nature), practically a fiction endowed with well-defined powers, such as the monopoly on coercive force, to attain particular goals.[18]

Table 1.1. Theories of the State and Territorial Concepts

STATE DEFINITION	TERRITORIAL CONCEPTS
Power system	The control of territory is a result of force and balance of power. The boundaries of sovereignty are determined by the power of the rulers and governments.
Social contract	The contract is enforceable on the territory of the parties to the agreement. The right to self-determination is therefore delineated by the territory of the participating members sharing common goals. If the agreement is irrevocable, it is also impossible to change its area of enforcement.
Unity	The territory is determined by the natural borders of the organism; "the homeland" is the geographic imprint made by history in realizing the characteristics of the community-people-nation.
Association	The territory is a legally defined area of jurisdiction upon which the state "association" has special rights (such as sovereignty) for attaining particular goals (such as maintenance of social order).

Although MacIver does not discuss the territorial aspects of these four state theories, Table 1.1 attempts to outline some of the territorial implications inherent in them.

In sixteenth-century Europe, the state was considered essentially a power system, hence the theories of Jean Boudein on absolute monarchic sovereignty. The view of the state as social contract, whether according to Hobbes, Locke, or Rousseau, discarded most of the mysticism attached to the state and replaced it with the natural right of free individuals who join together to achieve common goals. This approach somewhat obscured the distinction between society and state, says MacIver, which is perhaps why others began to look for the organic roots of the state in response to its demystification and the emphasis on individual rights. There was a new emphasis on the "personality" of the state that, according to Fichte, is more pure and rational than the particularistic desires of individual members. And so a certain cycle was closed: The social contract became holy, with its own irreversible will. Later, it would become easy to infuse cultural, religious and other elements into this concept and to maintain that the state as a unity also expresses the spirit of the nation. Thus, a three-way link was created between the modern state, nationality, and territory. In contrast, the state as an "association" returns to the foundations of the social contract, adding a normative basis to the agreement among its participants. This approach regards the state as an extension of society. It can neither grow nor atrophy, but only serve (or fail to serve) the goals of its members. In this state, territory is a functional and rather "fluid" component because association members (the citizens) have the right to enter or exit according to their own perception of the costs and benefits.

The last two concepts in Table 1.1 contain the components we related to territorial arguments. When the state is a unity, the dominant component is expressive—axiomatic identification with the organic state or the national homeland. When the state is an association, the dominant component is instrumental—a continuous assessment of the advantages over the disadvantages of belonging. There is a specific kind of "geographic determinism" within the concept of the state as a unity: The will to have the nation's borders, state's sovereignty, and territorial area coincide. For instance, the territory is the body of the national organism and the language is the soul.[19] For the state as an association, geography is a dependent variable: It can be based on national identity as well as on other interests—economic, for example. Hence, the territorial extent of the association is the result of specific social needs. In theory, self-determination need not necessarily be based on national identity.

Territory and the Nation-State

We will not delve into the many questions related to defining nationalism and the nation-state. Whether the emphasis is on common language, religion, heritage, or unity in the face of an external threat, the concept of nationhood is tangibly and symbolically linked to a particular piece of land.[20] However, since nationalism also develops in territories where dissimilar groups have undergone a process of convergence, the question of which came first, common territory or national consciousness, must remain open. The territorial nation-state developed first in Europe as a replacement for the former feudal system and a continuation of the concept of territorial sovereignty.[21] When the aspiration for self-determination and the ambition to achieve statehood became congruent, a major complication arose in determining the "correct" territorial boundaries between states.

The situation was relatively simple, if not "just" in the eyes of many communities, as long as military occupation or traditional sovereignty on a particular territory served as the de facto basis for determining boundaries. But when the search began for an objective criterion to define the geographic legitimacy of nation-states, it could not easily be found, and it was impossible to agree on its implementation. Most of the groups that sought and are still seeking territorial self-determination did not and probably will not achieve their goal. According to Murdock's "Ethnographic Atlas," in the 1960s, in addition to existing states, there were no fewer than 862 ethnically distinct societies that could seemingly claim self-determination within a territorial state.[22] As Taylor notes, "There may well be only one deity, but he or she has certainly been generous in designating 'chosen people'."[23]

In the late twentieth century, the world is divided into about 200 states. The process of determining sovereign geographical units has been more or less completed, with the possibility of some upheavals and additions resulting from recent changes in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and the Balkans. It can be predicted that the issue of establishing national territorial states will not engage us to the same extent in the twenty-first century. The principle of "self-determination" that illuminated the "Spring of Nations" in nineteenth-century Europe encountered great difficulties when the victorious powers tried to apply it at the Versailles Peace Conference after World War I. President Woodrow Wilson agreed with Robert Frost that "good fences make good neighbors" and searched for "an evident principle" for establishing reasonable political boundaries between the nations that would inherit the

Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires. Yet, as a former professor of political science, Wilson was aware of the difficulties and practical obstacles to acting according to the principle of self-determination: "All properly defined national aspirations must be satisfied in order that the matter will not make existing differences and disagreements permanent or raise new ones."[24]

Delegations of peoples demanding self-determination appeared before the Versailles Conference, including representatives of the Zionist organization, headed by Weizmann, and of the Arab delegation, headed by the Emir Faisal. Most of them left empty-handed. The territorial partition of the Middle East and the mandatory system of the League of Nations were ultimately determined by the interests of the colonial powers. The results in Europe and elsewhere are well known, leading Kedourie to write that "in the confusion of the peace conference, liberty was mistaken for the twin of nationality."[25]

Nationalism is a sense of community that, under particular historic conditions, seeks expression through the unity of a state.[26] Indeed, this very powerful motivation found a natural ally, yet one full of internal contradictions, in the state. Hence the conflict between the state as a faithful reflection of primordial loyalties and the state as a political and civil entity.[27] On the one hand, the assumption is that the nation as a collective entity exists before or regardless of the state. On the other hand, the nation is a political concept that springs to life in the context of a nation-state.[28]

A nation-state whose ethnic-territorial composition coincides with the political framework is less problematic and generally has fewer territorial demands. Yet there are few such monoethnic states, and they are also occasionally involved in territorial disputes.[29] Moreover, social differences, strong internal tensions, and even separatist demands can develop within monoethnic states. Most states are polyethnic. Thus, the nation-state, which one would assume creates a clear and agreed-upon criterion for distinguishing between communities, did not solve the problem of territorial borders. In the twentieth century, most international conflicts revolved around the contradictory demands of peoples and states to a particular territory. In many, the demand to create a symmetry between the nation and its sovereign boundaries was only an excuse to justify territorial expansionism. Either way, territorial demands aimed at protecting the national "cradle" or the "historical homeland" are quite widespread.

Concerning "homeland" as the basis for determining the national territory, Deutsch writes that the actual place where a

person is born "has the size of a bed or a room, not the size of a country."[30] He maintains that the development of national consciousness results from processes of communication among individuals and groups and that the erection of social or territorial barriers essentially indicates changes in communication patterns. The more active the internal communications network becomes, the greater the tendency to separate from other excluded groups. At a later stage, this process will crystallize into national consciousness, national will, and symbols expressing the uniqueness of the community.[31] Deutsch developed this approach later, when he defined organizations and autonomous communities in terms of a communication differential: Among members there is more rapid and effective communication than with outsiders.[32] This is a completely different approach to the process of boundary formation between communities, peoples, and states. Comparing this conception to MacIver's model of the state as association, we find a common emphasis on the territorial state as a normative arrangement of humans engaged in pursuing common goals. We also find a sharp antithesis to the theories emphasizing latent forces or seeking out natural laws and organic explanations for the rise of the nation-state. In 1953, Deutsch had already proposed an alternative explanation for the phenomenon of nationalism, emphasizing the social and economic processes of nineteenth century Europe. Others linked it directly to the process of modernization and stressed that nationalism is not only an ideology, but also a particular orientation intended to cement a growing and developing mass society.[33]

Gellner reversed the order in explaining the growth of nationalism.[34] A feeling of kinship is generally considered the basis for nationalism. In Gellner's opinion, however, the sweeping changes in education and communication of the industrial revolution created the need for a common "political roof"—the modern nation-state. Therefore, the mystical elements in nationalism are an artificial appendage because nationalism is not a "natural order" but an expression of the modern era. The cultural and historical "raw materials" from the prenational period are used to justify the need for a separate framework. Gellner admits that his definition is tautological: Particular conditions cause the appearance of national units, within whose framework nations are created. In any event, nationalism can be identified only after the fact. Also, there is no certainty that the presently strong identification of the political unit (the state) with the social-cultural unit (the nation) will continue in the future.

Accordingly, the present territorial partitions between nation-states will not last just because they exist or because of current definitions of sovereignty in international law. Boundaries in the modern era are becoming perforated because of global economics, communication, or the dangers to the environment.[35] At the same time, local, communal, and religious loyalties within the nation-state tend to increase. Note that those who predict that the nation-state will wither away also tend to emphasize the instrumental component in the territorial nation-state and consider expressive identification to be transient. They therefore reject any deterministic explanation of the rise of the nation-state and its territorial dimensions. Yet one cannot ignore the fact that the territorial nation-state still represents one of the strongest loyalties around the globe. It has been called the *new tribalism* due to the rise of nationalism in the former Soviet bloc and almost a return to the situation after World War I.[36] The long-term suspension of these separate loyalties within the former Soviet Union or within one state such as Yugoslavia has not reduced their intensity, despite the reverse trend in western Europe.

In sum, the internal tension among conflicting loyalties in the nation-state and beyond, including the territorial significance of this conflict, are not a thing of the past. In each case, the question is the stage of development and the degree of intensity: In other words, does the national loyalty, including the territorial element, predominate. Our approach fully admits that various and conflicting loyalties may be competing for primacy. For example, patriotic loyalty to the national homeland may be placed above personal interests and may compete with other loyalties—one's professional, communal, or cultural identity or values that transcend the boundaries of the national territory.[37] The approach here reflects the duality noted in our discussion of the territorial motivations of human behavior. Conversely, awarding primacy to the nation-state turns it into the sole player in the international arena, as we shall see below.

Geopolitics and International Relations

The discussion of boundaries requires a long introduction, which is beyond the scope of this chapter on the interrelationship of politics and geography, but a few pertinent historical facts should be noted.[38] Geopolitics, as it is now called, has roots in the European school of "environmental determinism" of the late nineteenth century, which

asserted that social and political phenomena can be explained through the physical and geographical environment.[39] This theory was extended by Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904), who claimed that human societies are subject to natural laws of growth, development, and decay and that states are organic entities which act according to these laws.[40] Ratzel was the first to use the term "living space" (*lebensräum*) to describe the expansion of states, even though he never recommended policies aimed at its realization. Next the Swedish political scientist Kjellén (1864–1922) used the term *geopolitik* to refer to a comprehensive theory of the modern state and of power relations among states.[41] Geopolitics then acquired a deterministic bias—as the concrete expression of geographic facts that politics could not (and therefore should not) ignore. For instance, the American geographer Van-Valkenburg went further than Kjellén when he mapped the world according to the cyclical presence of youthful, adolescent, mature, and old-age stages of statehood.[42]

Geopolitics became an ideology in Nazi Germany. Ethnocentricity distinguishes clearly between the writings of Ratzel and Kjellén and those of later German geopoliticists. The former strove to develop a universal science of political geography. Although the latter claimed universalism and adopted Ratzel and Kjellén as their spiritual leaders, this was only a cover for their preoccupation with Germany alone. Their geopolitics began and ended with the fate of Germany in Central Europe (*Mittlerupa*) and, over time, Europe-Asia-Africa and the entire world. What began as scientific pretension under the heading *geopolitik* and the influence of Ratzel, Kjellén, and Mackinder (see later) evolved into "geostrategy" and the racial theory of territory and space serving Nazi ideology and policies. The key figure for understanding these acrobatics was General Karl Haushofer (1869–1946).

Haushofer and his colleagues endeavored to make geopolitics the "national science of the state" (*die nationale staatwissenschaft*), a suprascience based on the nation-state and encompassing economics, sociology, anthropology, history, and law.[43] Haushofer preached simultaneously that geopolitics must become the "geographical conscience of the state."[44] This seemingly minor contradiction between *science* and *conscience* reveals the oversimplification and shallowness of a theory that reduced all human needs to concepts of space and boundaries represented by geographic maps. According to the geopolitical prescription for what Haushofer called *applied science*, states are measured by only two standards: power and territory.[45] The terms *living space, boundaries,* and *border*

areas and the role of geopolitical maps in this context were extensively discussed in the publication Haushofer edited in Munich from 1924 to 1944, *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*. However, it is difficult to present precise definitions due to their propagandistic nature as well as their internal contradictions.

Haushofer and his colleagues were geographical determinists, as evidenced by their intense preoccupation with "space" (*räum*) as the basis for understanding human, particularly political, behavior. Accordingly, the needs of the organic state are actually dictated by territorial imperatives, justifying the use of political power. Yet space is also seen as a flexible component that can change, for example, to create symmetry between the political definition of the "German State" (*Deutsches Reich*) and the linguistic definition of the "German Land" (*Deutschland*). Theoretically, therefore, certain areas that are outside the relevant space can still somehow be related to it, because of their German-speaking populations. Fine distinctions like these do not change the basic fact that territory fulfills a primary function in this approach that strives for the unity of "one land, one people and one geopolitical unit."[46]

Living space, a term Haushofer borrowed from Ratzel, includes very tenuously bonded components. Following Mackinder, Haushofer developed a series of strategic arguments, the central one being Germany's need to expand to control the essential heartland of Europe and later also of Africa.[47] Why must Germany expand? In Haushofer's writings, the arguments are still instrumental: the need to create security zones and control natural resources, routes of transportation, and communication. But later this kind of justification was quickly abandoned in favor of statements that the nation's combined "needs" determine the living space. The nuanced language is eliminated in Nazi ideology. Courses for S. S. officers included the explicit declaration that conquest of living space and settlement of Eastern European territories by Germans are not based on economic interests.[48]

The original concept of "living space" encompassed mystical foundations, but was not racist. Yet the leap in Nazi ideology to a term used in racist argumentation, *biological living space*, was not convoluted but rather an extension of the link between space and German "needs." Thus, for example, the Nazis argued that this space included areas in which "germanism" historically developed a high level of racial purity, which was particularly preserved by the pure German peasant family. So the cycle was complete, creating the link between race and territory, blood and land (*blut un boden*). Familiar romantic associations were added: space as a sym-

bol of ancient and untamed nature, the unmediated bond with the virgin land awaiting redemption. Religious redemption was combined with national and racial pride and the supremacy of the state.[49] Nazi propaganda stated clearly and simply: "The laws of blood and land" determine German living space. Geopolitics and Nazism were thus coupled to serve the dream of a greater Germany.

The conception of boundaries was derived from the theory of living space. Consequently, Haushofer and his colleagues could not be satisfied with distinguishing between natural and artificial borders and thus inadvertently helped shatter many geographic beliefs in "natural boundaries." Ratzel regarded boundaries as dynamic and temporary, something that changes in accordance with the laws of growth and the demise of states. A borderline has no significance, only border areas or frontiers. This allowed Haushofer to conduct a systematic propaganda campaign to raise the "frontier consciousness" of the German people: after all, territorial laws dictate that a growing nation must expand its living space. In his first book, Haushofer distinguished between boundaries borrowed from nature (rivers, oceans) or natural barriers (mountain ranges, swamps, deserts) and artificial boundaries based on strategic military, economic or political interests. The latter most interested German geopoliticists. They invented the ambiguous term *organic frontiers* in an attempt to combine ideological, historical, and national justifications with practical arguments such as the need for economic depth, strategic buffer zones, and control of communication channels into one geographic definition. In the final analysis, says Bowman, *geopolitik* in Nazi Germany served simply as an apology for theft.[50]

Analysis of the significance of territory and its place in international relations greatly predated German geopolitics, especially concerning the strategic position of states. A name already mentioned is that of the British geographer Halford Mackinder (1861–1947), who decisively influenced the development of this field in the early twentieth century. Mackinder analyzed relations among the world powers and theorized that the central struggle for global control is between continental and maritime states. In his book, published on the eve of World War I, Mackinder stated that the struggle would be won by whoever controlled the central "heartland" stretching from Siberia to Persia. Whether we regard his rules as a warning against the German danger looming over Western democracies[51] or as an impartial analysis of global trends, Mackinder belongs to the determinist school. He believed that by assembling the pieces of the geographic puzzle, one inevitably un-

derstands the deployment—and even the intentions—of the world's strategic forces. Mackinder directly influenced the statesmen at the Versailles Peace Conference who redrew the map of Europe.

Mackinder also influenced American geographer Nicholas Spykman, particularly when he offered strategic policy recommendations for the United States.[52] Spykman's geographic determinism is moderate by comparison with geopoliticists like Renner, who preached American power politics along the lines of the German geopoliticists.[53] Spykman recognized that political geography examines geographic considerations together with dynamic changes in centers of power.[54] He attacked Haushofer head on, accusing him of using the concept of the state as a living organism with hidden needs to conceal and justify a policy of force and expansionism. Nevertheless, Spykman's basic approach remained very similar to an article he had written in 1938, which caused some to call him—unjustly—the *American Haushofer*.[55]

Those who use the term *political geography*, as opposed to *geopolitics*, have sought to indicate an area of study concerned with the interrelationship between politics and geography.[56] In Hartshorne's opinion, political geography is the study of "politically organized areas," and these areas in our times are states. Accordingly, his analysis of boundaries between states addresses questions of whether the neighboring states agree to their boundaries and whether the boundary is a closed buffer or open and accessible.[57]

The reaction of geographers like Hartshorne to the pseudoscience of geopolitics is understandable. But there is no need to ignore territorial questions or negate their importance in international relations, as expressed in border conflicts between states or in the link between internal and external disputes.[58] In two articles published after World War II, Gottmann drew conclusions from the failure to uncover principles of political behavior stemming from geography, as well as from the failed attempt to develop a global theory of territorial strategy and a comparative theory of border conflicts. In his opinion, intangible variables such as national loyalties are more significant than geographic variables in international relations. Moreover, political behavior revealed these variables to be as rigid as the physical facts.[59] Thus, the importance of geography in the study of international relations is primarily in recognizing the multiplicity of regional life-styles—the national iconography—because "the people and not the area determine the pattern of external relations."[60]

Reticence at using the term *geopolitics* has diminished in recent years. But neither outmoded geopolitical concepts nor the hope

of constructing a grand theory of global strategy resting on "solid geographic facts" has disappeared. For example, a book published in 1988 recommended a strategy for U.S. foreign policy in accordance with Mackinder's theories. The author maintained that the strength of the Soviet Union derived from its control of the "continental heartland," hence the now embarrassing conclusions: "For as far into the future as can be claimed contemporarily relevant, the Soviet Union is going to remain the source of danger—narrowly to American national security, more broadly (and quite literally) to the exercise of values of Western civilization."[61]

With the unfolding events in the Soviet Union, it became clear already in 1989 that the "relevant future" in this prediction would not last even one year. This book is just one contemporary, characteristic example—albeit a minor one—of what is presented as "solid geopolitical facts" under geographic determinism. As to the importance of territory and boundaries in the modern, technological age, Jones wrote as early as 1945: "All boundaries that were once considered strategic have now become tactical."[62] Prescott devoted an entire chapter to analyzing various types of boundary disputes to present questions intended to create an empirical basis for such research.[63] These included the following: What is the cause of the dispute? Why did it develop at a certain time? What are the aims of the involved governments? How do they justify their positions? The new political geography thus deals less with mapping physical phenomena and more with analysis of spatial political results of political behavior.[64]

Boundaries

The Versailles Peace Conference of 1919 was the last international attempt to arrange boundaries on the basis of principles of national self-determination. At the time, many believed that this was possible, and some geographers also thought that advancing geographic knowledge would minimize the danger of postwar international disputes.[65] They also repeated, after more than 100 years, Napoleon's dictum that the boundaries of France were outlined by nature.[66]

Europe between the wars shattered these beliefs, and many geographers began to reexamine the question of boundaries after World War II. Among those who discredited the concept of "natural boundaries" between states, even as a basis for empirical research, Jones was the most outspoken when he absolutely rejected any possibility of discovering general laws for the determination of

boundaries: "Every border is practically unique and therefore most generalizations are of doubtful validity."[67] Tenner was aware of the continuing search for boundaries to mark once and for all the "true" differences between societies. He therefore outlined the "ideal boundary" with some irony, suggesting the gap with reality: "[It] follows a clearly defined physical feature; encloses a homogeneous population; excludes none of the same racial stock; does not cut across economic regions or religious units; and does not interfere with well-established historical relationships."[68]

For Tenner, the best boundary depended upon prevailing conditions in the adjoining states and upon their mutual relations. Indeed, empirical studies show vast fluctuations in international European boundaries over the last 500 years (excluding Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland).[69] Muir reinforced these findings when he presented various typologies for boundary classification and disdained the arithmetical formulas intended to determine whether a certain boundary is "alive" or "dead."[70] For him, boundaries result from political realities, that do not change even if the political boundaries coincide with natural contours, because boundaries represent agreements and the results of conflicts between states. Accordingly, territorial boundaries and the conflicts surrounding them are rooted in the sense of difference and the need for segregation of communities and nations, what Deutsch termed the *internal intensity of communications.* Thus a different concept began to emerge, emphasizing the communal, national, and political aspects of geographic boundaries: "Aspiring to be unique, groups of people organize themselves within politically ordered societies and associations thereof. These societies are territorially framed. The edges of the frame are political boundaries."[71]

Boundaries, in this definition, are first of all political—a possible product of human aspirations and social organization. They have no determinist foundation and contradict the image of boundaries as the external shell of a whole and well-defined "unity" with a life of its own. This definition is also commensurate with MacIver's concept of the state as "association," including the fact that in the twentieth century, the nation-states have become the most important "associations."

This book adopts the position that the search for natural, clear, and "correct" boundaries will never be crowned with success, because the dividing lines between states are the outcome of political processes, that is, human decisions. This approach is also based on Douglas's anthropological analysis of the role of external boundaries in human behavior. One of her far-reaching conclusions is

that boundaries represent an attempt to impose order and system on what is inherently an untidy human experience.[72]

Natural Boundaries

Sempel's study (1911) of the historical role of geographic factors is based on the environmental theories of Ratzel. It draws a lesson from the fact that human development has geographic points of reference to exaggerate the influence of natural barriers, such as mountain ranges and deserts, on modern civilization.[73] Sempel's conclusions on geographic boundaries, however, again duplicate Ratzel's equivocation: Nature dislikes rigid lines; even rivers and beaches change with time. Racial and state boundaries are also subject to change, especially where expansive cycles of different peoples collide.[74] Accordingly, Sempel, in a typical mixture of organic and political concepts, observes: "All natural features of the earth's surface which serve to check, retard or weaken the expansion of peoples, and therefore hold them apart, tend to become racial or political boundaries."[75]

Where does the doctrine of "natural boundaries" originate? Some believe that the need for clear and permanent boundaries between European states was already widespread in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Others argue that the previous historic experience of the expansion waves of tribes and peoples (and even animals) influenced the creation of European political frameworks.[76] Either way, the hope was to bestow natural meaning on the new phenomena of sovereign states bordering one another. Hence the search for seas, rivers, lakes, mountains, and deserts to form natural barriers for defense or prevention of population movements. Where this was impossible, human-made alternatives were built, such as towers, dirt ramparts, or the chain of fortified positions in the style of the Roman Limes or the Great Wall of China.

There was a contradiction in German geopolitics between the growing organic state, whose boundaries are flexible, and the belief that stability is created when natural and political boundaries coincide. An attempt to solve this contradiction is the idea that the "growing state" expands to the next natural boundary. Concepts about the organic state and natural boundaries therefore belong to the same category: both are nourished by ideological aspirations and myths, not by empirical observation.[77] Either way, the idea of the natural boundary has lost all meaning. Boggs phrased it with sarcasm: "All borders are artificial. Some less than others."[78]

When the futile search for principles in the determination of political boundaries was abandoned, researchers began to focus on the functions of boundaries as they arose and changed over time. For example: developmental stages of boundaries, the relationship between a boundary and its environment, and the distinction between boundaries of separation and boundaries of contact.[79] In addition, international law stipulates that a boundary defines the area upon which a state's sovereignty is in effect and formulates specific rules for the acquisition of territory and the resolution of border disputes.[80] The Charter of the United Nations recognized the territorial integrity of sovereign nations: "All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state . . . "[81]

The prevailing definition of boundaries in contemporary literature is closer to international political reality and distant from the attempt to formulate binding "laws." It also recognizes the interrelationship between boundaries and the historical development of societies and states. For example, when a boundary is determined by political dictate—even if it is a geometric line across natural areas and homogeneous population centers—it will result in human development being different on its two sides. In the long run, these differences may be expressed not only in economic relations and routes of transportation, but also in variation of language, religion, and culture.[82] Moreover, stable and recognized boundaries, even if they are artificial, contribute to the legitimacy of the state, hence, for example, the Organization of African Unity's 1963 decision to recognize the colonially derived boundaries as permanent international borders.[83] And, finally, the longing for natural boundaries deserves the following useful comment: "It must be noted that 'natural boundaries' are always the limits to which a state wishes to expand. There is no recorded case of a state wishing to withdraw to 'natural boundaries.' "[84]

Frontiers

Boundaries or borders mark defined lines in the terrain. A frontier is an undefined area that is usually not densely populated (settlement frontier) or an area whose political status is ambiguous (political frontier). In this sense, there were practically no frontiers in Europe by the nineteenth century, although there were still many areas "open" to settlement or claims of sovereignty on other

continents. Hence the strong connection between the term *frontiers* and the westward movement of the U.S. line of settlement.[85]

The distinction between an area and a line is central here, because the term *frontier* is centrifugal and outwardly oriented whereas the term *boundary* is centripidal and inwardly oriented.[86] "Boundaries" and the needs associated with them may also indicate readiness to recognize limitations and to establish restrictions on the realization of personal or collective goals. By contrast, the image of the frontier always has an incomplete, open, and dynamic aspect.[87] A society or a state whose self-definition (including the territorial) is saturated with frontier images is still in the formative stage because open areas exist somewhere along its "front line" for settlement, development, or even redemption. Conversely, collective internalization of the presence of limiting boundaries reflects a political community that has reached a relatively high level of self-determination, stability, and internal cohesion.[88]

Kimmerling studied the process of settlement in immigrant countries as background to an analysis of the territorialism of Zionism and developed new concepts concerning the relationship between the frontier areas and state control over the territory.[89] He examines three types of territorial control:

1. *Presence*. Existence of missionaries, merchants, explorers, and potential settlers for purposes of laying claim to the property or as a stage in later military conquest.
2. *Ownership*. Use of legal or semilegal means to establish rights—private or public—over the land. Such rights could be an alternative to sovereignty.
3. *Sovereignty*. Establishing state authority in the territory.

These forms of control and the various combinations among them determine the status or the lack of status of the state in the frontier areas, if such exist. For instance, the existence of active "frontiers" in the American sense of the term indicates less control of the state regarding social changes, including control of the territorial location of these changes.[90]

In the second half of the twentieth century, few territories could be defined as frontiers. The "frontier spirit" motivating peoples and states to take control of new areas has also been much less intense.[91] Nevertheless, it would be an exaggeration to say that "there are no longer any frontiers—they are now a phenomenon of history."[92] In the Middle East alone, many examples refute such a

conclusion. If we exclude competition for the exploitation of the ocean depths, polar regions, and outer space, what is disappearing is the frontier as a synonym for freely available resources. Frontiers do, however, exist in the political and subjective sense—as areas of undefined status or territories where states try to establish rights of presence, ownership, and sovereignty.

The issue of geographic or social frontiers is important for understanding the positions and decisions of the Zionist movement and the state of Israel. Kimmerling maintains that the case of Palestine/Land of Israel differed from frontiers elsewhere because, in effect, these territories were not "freely available" in terms of population or untapped natural resources.[93] Nevertheless, some of the perceptions and positions to be discussed in this book reflect the attempts to implement Kimmerling's types of territorial control, as well as "the frontier spirit" in the sense noted previously.

Size and Compactness

The size of the territory proportionate to the number of inhabitants was a subject of great concern to the German geopoliticists, whereas the state's geographic location interested strategic and international relations experts. Both touched upon another related question—the physical shape of the state, which results from the features and length of the boundaries. This research generally emphasizes the security aspect: the existence of defensible borders or strategic depth for deterring attacks and defending population centers and other essential targets.

The prevailing assumption is that the state's ideal shape is a circle, with its capital at the center. This form has obvious advantages: shortening the lines of transport and communications, reducing the range required for central government control, and minimizing the length of boundaries, which abet security against external threats and internal separatism.[94] A number of shape indices were developed to analyze and compare the "compactness" of states. One measures the deviation of the state's actual boundary length from that of the ideal circular circumference, which represents the shortest boundary for that area. In this simple index, this is the difference between the shortest possible land boundaries of the state's area and the actual land boundaries in the state's existing shape. The ideal state has a compactness index of 1.00. Accordingly, the most "compact