THE NATURE OF FRONTIERS AND BOUNDARIES

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There exists a quite extensive literature dealing with the subject of frontiers and boundaries. There have been also successful attempts at classification and development of a proper terminology. Few writers have, however, tackled the problem from a more theoretical point of view. This study is more particularly concerned with the problem of clarifying, and disentangling for the purpose of theoretical understanding, the two elements which combine in what we commonly call frontiers and boundaries: the physical (or nonhuman geographical, or "natural") and the political, i.e., moral and legal, element.

THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF TERMS

In common speech we use the words "frontier" and "boundary" with the implication that these have not only a quite well-defined meaning but also that they are (or almost) interchangeable. However, it does not take much reading in pertinent literature to discover that the problem is not so simple.

Frontier.—Historically, the word "frontier" implied what it suggests etymologically, that is, that which is "in front." The frontier was not an abstract term or line; on the contrary, it designated an area which was part of a whole, specifically that part which was ahead of the hinterland. Hence it was often called the foreland, or borderland, or march. For

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As this study proceeds, reference will be made to pertinent works.

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the purpose of our discussion it must be stressed that in its historical origin the frontier was (1) not a legal concept, and (2) not, or at least not essentially, a political or intellectual concept. It was rather a phenomenon of "the facts of life"—a manifestation of the spontaneous tendency for growth of the ecumene. In antiquity, and later too, the frontier was on the margin of the inhabited world, but each particular ecumene, for instance, that of the agricultural society as opposed to the nomad society, also had a frontier. The *limes* of the Roman empire were those of the ecumene of Western civilization.  

With the development of patterns of civilization above the level of mere subsistence strictly adapted to particular environmental conditions, the frontiers between ecumene became meeting places not merely of different ways of physical survival, but also of different concepts of the good life, and hence increasingly political in character. But even at this stage the frontier was something very different from what a modern boundary is. It had not the connotation of an area or zone which marks a definite limit or end of a political unit. On the contrary, given the theory that there can (or should) be only one state—a universal state—the frontier meant quite literally "the front": the *frons* of the *imperium mundi* which expands to the only limits it can acknowledge, namely, the limits of the world. Thus the frontier was not the end ("tail") but rather the beginning ("forehead") of the state; it was the spearhead of light and knowledge entity. *Ukraina* (like the several German *Mark*) was originally not a proper name of a specific country, the Ukraine of today, but a general description of the lands on the periphery of Russ or Lithuania (later Poland). Cf. Yury Serech, "An Important Work in Ukrainian Onomastics," *The Annals of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the U.S.*, Vol. II, No. 4 (Winter, 1952), pp. 435–44.  

8 The Greek *oikumene* designated the areas of the inhabited world known to the Greeks.  

9 Lapradelle (op. cit., pp. 9–11) distinguishes three types (or three stages of evolution) of the frontier: (1) the concept of the frontier in "pure geography" (i.e., "geography as a pure science applied to the study of the physical aspects of the earth") in which it designates zones under the influence of several physical phenomena; for instance, the estuary is subject to two different and contradictory forces, those of the river and those of the sea; (2) the concept of the "geographic frontier of the second degree," that is, the anthropo-geographical concept of the frontier between particular ecumenes; and (3) the concept of the political frontier.

expanding into the realm of darkness and of the unknown. The borderlands—the marches—were areas of dawn; they were frontiers in the sense of Turner’s agricultural frontier: pioneer settlements of a forward-moving culture bent on occupying the whole area.  

**Boundary.**—The etymology of the word "boundary" immediately points to the primary function of the boundary: the boundary indicates certain well established limits (the bounds) of the given political unit, and all that which is within the boundary is bound together, that is, it is fastened by an internal bond.  

"Boundary" is a term appropriate to the present-day concept of the state, that is, the state as a sovereign (or autonomous) spatial unit, one among many. Since the transition from tribal law to territorial law the essen-

10 The Russian *ukraina* was also an advancing frontier, a spearhead directed against the "dark" and unchristian Tartary, and the Cossacks were not a nation or ethnic group, but a social group: pioneer settlers and conquerors of the advancing borderlands, men not unlike the American frontiersmen.


12 Tribal law is sometimes identified broadly with primitive law—the law of primitive societies—and in this case it may also be territorial. Caesar described how German tribes used territorial jurisdiction in their internal affairs in times of peace and tribal law (one authority for the whole tribe irrespective of territory) in case an external war threatened (*De Bello Gallico*, Bk. VI, Chap. XXIII, 29–34). But some authorities have pointed out that the essence of the tribal system is "a theory of blood relationship" (*E. Sidney Hartland*, *Primitiv Law* [London: Methuen & Co., 1924], p. 43). I am using tribal law in this more restricted sense of "right of blood" (*jus sanguinis*), especially as related to citizenship and international relations: not territory but blood relationship is the basis of the tribal "state"; citizenship is acquired only by right of blood, irrespective of place of birth or residence, and the tribal political rights and duties extend to all with a right of blood and only to them.—Modern international law is based on the principle of territorial sovereignty (impenetrability) of states but some concessions to *jus sanguinis* are made in questions of citizenship. The Nazi government attempted to revive tribal Germanic law and granted full political rights only to citizens by right of blood (*Reichsbürger*), while reducing the status of territorial subjects (*Reichs-gehörige*).
tials of statehood, both from the functional and legal point of view, are: territory, people, and a government in effective control internally, independent externally, and willing and able to assume obligations under international (or federal) law. Sovereignty is territorial; hence it must have a certain known extent: a territory under exclusive jurisdiction limited by state boundaries. The borderlands, the old marchlands, are defined more and more exactly until there is, in principle, an exact borderline. The modern sovereign state is bound within and confined to its legal limits. The boundaries bind together an area and a people which live under one sovereign government and law and are, at least presumably, integrated not only administratively and economically but also by means of a state idea or "crede." At the same time "the state is marked off from its neighbors by political boundaries." In an age in which we (with exceptions) do not think in terms of universal empires but accept the co-existence of many creeds and states, it is important to have the spheres of the several centripetal, integrating forces legally delimited.


14. In practice there is never merely a line but a zone which for different political, strategic, or administrative reasons may be broader or narrower, or even graduated in the restrictions it imposes and limitations it creates. Cf. Otto Maull, Politische Geographie (Berlin: Safari-Verlag, 1956), p. 56.


17. Since communists do think in terms of a universal empire and do not, ultimately, accept the co-existence of many creeds and states, they deny the importance of, or even the need for, boundaries within their orbit. Speaking in Leipzig, on March 7, 1959, Soviet Prime Minister N. S. Khrushchev stressed that boundary questions in Eastern Europe could be safely ignored: "We consider that to us communists the question of boundaries is not of major importance and that there can be no conflicts about it between Socialist countries... With the victory of Communism... state boundaries will die off." East Europe, Vol. VIII, No.

18. The differences between frontiers and boundaries

19. Historical memories play a role in the choice we make between the two words. We speak of the boundaries of Massachusetts, or Boston, or of this or that county. We do not refer to them as frontiers because they have never been associated in our memory with fronts, frontiersmen, and the whole expansionist and beyond-the-legal atmosphere of life in frontier lands. But we do (although less and less as time passes) sometimes speak of the U.S.—Mexican, or U.S.—Canadian frontier, and still more about the frontiers of Russia and China. This because we associate past frontier conditions with the areas through which these present-day boundaries are drawn.

20. Adami (op. cit., p. 3, note) observes that most Italian writers use the word boundary (confine) and not frontier (frontiera) to indicate the legal limits of a state. An interesting discussion of the differences between frontiers and boundaries can be found in Owen Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers of China (New York: American Geographical Society, 1940), pp. 233-42, 480-83, 495-510.

21. "There grows up a nexus of border interests which resents and works against the central interest. This phenomenon of the border society, differing in orientation from the bulk of the nation, recurs in history at all times and in many places." Lattimore, op. cit.; p. 244. The conflict of interests between the foreland and the hinterland may be so acute as to
center nor binding its realm. Rather, they represent runaway elements and interests of the state’s corporate body.23

The boundary, on the contrary, is inner-oriented. It is created and maintained by the will of the central government. It has no life of its own, not even a material existence. Boundary stones are not the boundary itself. They are not coeval with it, only its visible symbols. Also, the boundary is not tied inextricably to people—people teeming, spontaneous, and unmediated in their daily activities on, along, or athwart the border. It is the mediated will of the people: abstracted and generalized in the national law, subjected to the tests of international law, it is far removed from the changing desires and aspirations of the inhabitants of the borderlands.

While the frontier is inconceivable without frontiersmen—an “empty frontier” would be merely a desert—the boundary seems often to be happiest, and have the best chances of long survival, when it is not bothered by frontiersmen.24 Yet, the boundary line is not merely an abstraction. Still less can it be a legal fiction. It must be reality, or, rather, reflect reality. In other words, it must be co-ordinated with an empirical force actually present and asserting itself in the terrain. The boundary is, in fact, the outer line of effective control exercised by the central government.25

The frontier is a manifestation of centrifugal forces. On the other hand, the range and vigor of centripetal forces is indicated by the boundary. True, the frontier has, and always had, also a strategic meaning—the defensive line which keeps enemies out—and in this it depends on support from the hinterland. But precisely in order to be able to maximize its strategic forces the central government must mobilize and integrate all the available resources. All efforts and loyalties must be concentrated and co-ordinated under the banner of the state idea and interest. Consequently, the frontier lands, too, have to be controlled and bound to the state; they must be subordinated to the imperative and overriding demands of the sovereign raison d’être of the state as a whole. In other words, an effort is

24 The boundaries of the state are determined according to the principle of effectiveness, which plays an important part in international law. The exclusive validity of a national legal order extends according to international law just as far as this order is firmly established, i.e., is, on the whole, effective, as far as the national legal order is permanently obeyed and applied.” Hans Kelsen, Principles of International Law (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1952), p. 213.
made to draw somewhere a line of effective control over both ingress and egress: not only the enemy has to be kept out but one's own citizens and resources have to be kept in. It is in the interest of the central government to substitute a boundary for the frontier. 26

The frontier is an integrating factor. Being a zone of transition from the sphere (ecumene) of one way of life to another, and representing forces which are neither fully assimilated to nor satisfied with either, it provides an excellent opportunity for mutual interpenetration and sway. Along the frontier life constantly manipulates the settled patterns of the pivotally organized socio-political and cultural structures. It is precisely this watering down of loyalties and blurring of differences that the central governments attempt to forestall by substituting the semi-autonomous frontiers with a controlled and exact borderline.

The boundary is, on the contrary, a separating factor. "[It is the] boundary [that] impinges on life. . . . Few natural obstacles restrict the movement of persons, things, and even ideas as completely as do the boundaries of some states." 27 The boundary separates the sovereign (or federal, or autonomous, or any other) political units from one another. However much physical-geographical, cultural, or certain political factors may tend to make it inconspicuous, it remains always a fixed

26 Lattimore (Inner Asian Frontiers . . . , pp. 238-42) points out that Intra-Mural China has developed a certain socio-political organization based on a specific type of economy (intensive agriculture) which was possible only within its area. Any Chinese settling further north (that is, beyond the ecumene of the "Chinese life" properly speaking), was necessarily adopting alien ways of life and thus becoming, in the long run, un-Chinese and an asset to the economy and power potential of the "barbarians," and not that of the Chinese emperor. The Great Wall had to prevent such loss resulting from dispersion of resources beyond the range of the Chinese cultural and economic centripetal forces. It marked also the limits of the area which, given the raison d'etre of the Chinese state, was susceptible to integration at a cost not exceeding the possible returns. —See also below, note 65.

27 Jones, op. cit., p. 11. The Germans, who have no separate words for "frontier" and "boundary" sometimes use the terms of Zusammenwachsgrenzen and Trennungszenren which indicate a similar confrontation of characteristics as that in our analysis of frontiers as stimulating a "growing together" and of boundaries as a divisive (separating) element. For a case study of Trennung- and Zusammenwachsgrenzen see M. Schwind, "Die Aussengrenzen Niedersachsens

obstacle; it impedes integration across the borderline. 28 To propose, as one writer does, 29 the drawing of boundaries in such a way as to make them meeting places for people and thus rather an assimilative than a dissipative factor is a misconception as to what a boundary is and what are its purposes and functions. Any assimilation, hence integration, cannot be stimulated by the drawing of a line which separates and delimits the spheres of the integrating forces, but, on the contrary, by the removal of such obstacles to interpenetration. Every confederation, federation, or merger of states must always begin with a (total, or at least partial) elimination of the limiting and separating factors inherent in the boundary, and thus a withering away of the boundary itself.

In general, discussing the differences between frontiers and boundaries, one faces a grave dilemma: to what degree is it possible to generalize about the frontier? The boundary is defined and regulated by law, national and international, and as such its status and characteristics are more uniform and can be defined with some precision. But the frontier is a phenomenon of history; like history it may repeat itself, but, again like history, it is always unique. It is difficult to pinpoint essential features of the frontier which are universally valid. For instance, the degree to which the frontier is an integrating factor depends on the attractiveness to the frontiersman of the way of life of his opposite number. This way of life usually seems attractive if the adoption of it promises better chances of survival in the given environment or if it appears generally "superior." On the American fron-

28 One German geographer speaks even of Grenzer- reisschäden: of "damages" that occur when a boundary is drawn that cuts through a previously culturally homogeneous area. Peter Schöller, "Wege und Irrwege der politischen Geographie und Geopolitik," Erdkunde, Vol. XI, No. 1 (February, 1957), pp. 1-20; on p. 17.

tier both the white settler and the Indian were willing to learn from each other certain techniques, but on the broader cultural level each considered his way of life as definitely preferable ("superior"). Consequently, the integrating process along the American frontier touched only upon the externals—the internal lives of the two social groups remained incompatible, witness the fact that intermarriages were rather rare and almost no white American ever really "became" an Indian or vice versa. The Spanish and the native Mexican culture were relatively more compatible; hence much more integration occurred along the frontier in Mexico, and the result is a genuinely composite culture, especially outside the cities.

The importance of the relative compatibility of cultures which meet on a given frontier can be illustrated by comparing the advance of the Russian and the northern Chinese frontier. Both of these frontiers have been biting into the heritage of the Mongol Empire. But the Russian way of life, based on an extensive agriculture, was much less different from that of the pastoral nomads of the Mongolian than was the Chinese culture which was based on an intensive and irrigated agriculture. This helps to explain why the Russians succeeded in taking such a lion’s bite of the Mongol Empire, and in integrating, even absorbing to a large extent, the natives, while the Chinese pushed their frontier only a few hundred miles or less into Extra-Mural China. Since the Russians did not, like the Americans, steam-roll the native cultures, or even the natives themselves, out of existence, the Russian expansion was not merely a frontier of conquest but also a frontier of integration: the new culture was the result of a fusion.30 There are historians who think that the Rus-

30 The American frontier was, of course, also an integrating factor—the proverbial "melting pot." It integrated on the frontier, it "melted" into a new nation all those Europeans who came into contact with the frontier, but it did not promote an across-the-frontier integration. In the writings of Frederick Jackson Turner the American frontier is not viewed as a borderland between two ecumene, between two different types of human societies. It is primarily a meeting place between man and nature, "the meeting point between savagery and civilization." True, the "savagery" includes the Indian and his civilization, but it is not, or at least not primarily, under the influence of the natives and their way of life that the settler changes. It is "the wilderness [that] masters the

sians paid a heavy price for integrating so many "barbarians": in the process they ceased to be Europeans and became Eur-Asiatics.

BOUNDARIES AS LEGAL–POLITICAL PHENOMENA PAR EXCELLENCE

We have said that boundaries are fixed by law. There is, however, often confusion as to what a law is and what kind of laws determine the limits of states. The misunderstandings which arose from the use of the terms "natural boundaries" and "artificial boundaries" are at least partly due to this confusion. Thus, it will be helpful if we make the distinction between three types of law:

1. Law of nature, i.e., scientific law, is a creature of facts. Ex facto jus oritur. It is ruled by the empirical world. We observe the natural phenomena (or reproduce them in a laboratory) and deduce from our observations certain generalizations about the behavior of elements and call them laws, e.g., the law of gravity. But these laws have no coercive power over nature. On the contrary, if facts do not conform to the laws, the latter are adjusted to conform to reality. The concordance between what is and the law must be absolute.

2. Natural law,31 i.e., moral law, is as strict as the scientific law but in an exactly opposite

31 Natural law (jus naturale) in the sense of an eschatological norm of human behavior, that is, behavior based on the metaphysical and teleological nature of man, and not on the physical nature of man which is animal and governed by the amoral law of nature (jus naturae).
sense. It is not the is but the ought which is sovereign. The status of the moral law is not affected by the facts. All Jews and Christians ought to obey the Ten Commandments, yet even if not a single one of them did, the Law would still be there; unchanged, categorical, and as binding as ever. The moral law exists in itself, that is, in the justice of "thou shalt" and not in the empirical world in which it may or may not be observed. While in the natural world a law which does not conform to facts is no law at all, in the moral world only that is a "fact," i.e., a moral fact, which conforms to the moral law.\textsuperscript{52}

(3) Jural law (lex) is a formal verbalization and particularization of the moral standards of a given socio-political order in respect to the practical (or at least observable) behavior of the members of the society. It is an attempt to bring the spiritual and empirical realms together, to make the moral standards "efficient." Three characteristics of jural law are important for our discussion: it is coercive, it may be violated,\textsuperscript{53} and its ultimate source is public opinion about values.\textsuperscript{54} Imperfect both in its moral substance and enforcing procedure, the jural law is, as all political phenomena are, the result of compromises reflecting the complexity of the social forces interacting on the given scene.

Boundaries are supported by jural laws.\textsuperscript{38} They are one of the spatial expressions of the given legal order. As distinguished from "boundaries" between phenomena of the physical geographical or natural history world, they are man-made geographical occurrences. A boundary does not exist in nature or by itself. It always owes its existence to man.\textsuperscript{36}

True, the "boundary" in the natural world,\textsuperscript{37} e.g., an orographic line, or the limit of the habitat of certain species of flora and fauna in the desert, steppe, or forest zone, also may occasionally be man-fixed, but it is not man created. It is in nature, and all man does is to shift and reshuffle it in space as he transforms the natural environment into a cultural environment.

The limit in the political world is not a matter of is; like everything political it is of the domain of ought. Man chooses between certain priorities and values—of faith, philosophy, or civilization—and decides according to them where the boundary ought to be: follow the line of religious divisions, extend to where "might made it right," or separate the peoples according to their tongues and customs. And the life span of the boundary is coeval with the pre-eminence of the forces stemming from the given "ought," for it is a function of human will.\textsuperscript{38} Human will brings

the opinion about morals and their practical applications and not, like the moral law, the moral standard. Politics is the process of choosing among several opinions in order to make one of them a legally binding norm.

\textsuperscript{38} "The boundaries of a state have always a legal character, whether or not they coincide with such 'natural' frontiers, as, e.g., a river or a mountain range." Kelsen, op. cit., p. 213. Obviously, boundaries depend on both national and international law, but for our purposes, and given our definition of the jural law, we do not need to distinguish between the two.

\textsuperscript{39} "The fixing of boundaries is not a problem of geography; it will always remain a task of the political decision makers." Schöller, op. cit., p. 19.

\textsuperscript{37} The Germans have a good term for "boundary" in the natural world: Natur Grenze. It should, however, not be confused with natürliche Grenze, the so-called "natural boundary" which, as Adam (op. cit., p. 4, note) correctly points out, is a seminatural (or, rather, mixed and confused) concept of boundary. On Natur and natürliche Grenze see Soehl, op. cit., especially p. 14.

\textsuperscript{34} "[The source of jural law] lies not in the behavior of the society and its members, but in the prevailing opinion of what that behavior ought to be." Ibid. It is to be noted that the jural law is always merely a derivative norm of behavior concerned with specific places and timebound situations, and as such it is only

\textsuperscript{52} It is in this sense of necessary conformity between facts and laws in the spiritual realm that Hegel declared that "what is real is rational and what is rational is real." Similarly, in Kant’s philosophy the possibility of a bad will is denied. In the noumenal world, i.e., in the world of pure reason, freedom, and morality, there can be only good will. A bad will would be a self-contradiction; it would not be a will at all, but only an impulse guided by the deterministic forces dominating the phenomenal world.

\textsuperscript{53} In the realm of the scientific law the automatic relationships leave no room for an "ought." In the realm of the moral law, which is based on the principle of free will, it is coercion which has no place. In the realm of the jural law the standing of both the "ought" and the free will are depreciated by the factor of coercion, but they are not eliminated. We do not obey the law mechanically. We either can follow the "ought" and be law-abiding, or let our free will brave the threat of sanctions and become lawbreakers. "It is the essence of a jural law that it may be violated, whereas a scientific law cannot be violated." Quincy Wright, Contemporary International Law: A Balance Sheet (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1955), p. 53.
it to life and must sustain it continuously in the terrain or at least within the legal framework on which it rests.

The "boundaries" in the natural world rest on physical laws which are self-enforcing and cannot be broken. A water divide always conforms to the law of gravity, and it must always exist in nature. It does not need to and cannot be willed because it is independent of human will. Man may want to know where it is, but he does not create it. In any given environment the watershed is automatically traced by immutable physical laws. The boundaries in the political world are, on the contrary, built on jural laws, and thus, in the ultimate instance, on the moral laws accepted by the lawmakers. Given certain values the boundary ought to be here or there, but it may be elsewhere. Moral laws are not absolute rulers. They are, like all wisdom, only advisory.

If we understand the political nature of boundaries we shall never commit the mistake of speaking, like Lapradelle, of an objective as opposed to a subjective (that is, one leaving room for choices and preferences) conception of boundary-making. Even if we reject other reasons, to sustain a boundary running along the same demarcation line. A boundary drawn by the will of an absolute king can survive him, his dynasty, or even the institution of monarchy, provided a new will, e.g., that of the sovereign nation, is substituted for the old. The change may be imperceptible to contemporaries. The old boundary becomes slowly obsolete—it disappears gradually as one political phenomenon and re-emerges simultaneously as a new, geographically perhaps identical but politically and functionally different, phenomenon. No boundary survives as a pure relict, that is, merely by the dead weight of inertia, but its impress upon the human landscape may, in the long run, contribute to the crystallization of cultural patterns that will have a vested interest in it. See the discussion of "persistence in relict boundaries" and of "concurrent persistence and obsolescence" of boundaries in Eric Fischer, "On Boundaries," World Politics, Vol. 1, No. 2 (January, 1949), pp. 196-222.

Obviously, man may change the landscape and thus alter the course of the watershed. But whatever cultural environment man creates it will be inescapably governed by the same law of gravity which rules all physical environments.

"In the rule of law the connection between condition and consequence is characterized by the term 'ought,' in order to emphasize that the rule of law has not the meaning of a law of nature." Kelsen, op. cit., p. 6.

Lapradelle, op. cit., pp. 89-96, speaks of two "principles-types" of delimitation of boundaries: the currently fashionable theories of cultural relativism and adhere to the classic philosophical concept of objective truths, problems of boundaries will always remain a matter of the particular—an application of general principles to specific cases—and thus par excellence political. To say that there is an "objective conception" of politics which eliminates choices reminds us of the often advocated "depoliticised politics." Politics without alternatives and choices is a contradiction in terms; like dehydrated water.

In fact, not only boundaries but all limits ascribed to an area—any compound area, also a non-political purely physical geographical and wholly uninhabited area—are always objective and subjective conception. He does not seem to see any fundamental difference between a watershed, i.e., a physical geographical "boundary," and a boundary properly speaking, for instance, one based on the ethnological principle. He thinks there is a transition between the two (cf. pp. 9-11) and each may, according to circumstances, be considered the objective boundary of a state. Where the border zone is not, or only little, populated and thus "the physical element of the soil predominant" the watershed is the "ideal limit," while in areas where the human element predominates it is the plebiscite which is "the only objective criterion of political origin" (p. 90; emphasis added).

"While in the objective conception of delimitation two confronting states have to accept a limit-type, in the subjective theory they choose freely." Ibid., p. 95; emphasis added.

It seems that it is precisely this that Lapradelle advocates. He thinks that international law should apply the "objective thesis" and divorce itself from the "political point of view" (ibid., p. 96). Lapradelle forgets that international law is both in its origin and essence political; it is not a technical or otherwise scientific and objective law. Jural laws are objective criteria only given our agreement as to the underlying philosophy. There was a time, in the early 1930s, when the U.S. Congress and different protectionist lobbies labored on a scheme for a "scientific tariff." However much it was "scientifically" calculated, the tariff, and the statute establishing it, was nonetheless not above subjectivity; it was a matter of choices between values and alternatives, and the result of direct political pressures.

In defining the limits of a compound (complex "total") area we take into consideration all, or at least several, factors present in it and affecting its homogeneity; hence we act as the arbiter who decides how much weight should be given to any particular factor. The limits of a simple area, e.g., a drainage basin, are by definition monistically defined. Nature does not make value judgments; hence it cannot be an arbiter over the limits of a compound area. The "boundaries" in the natural world can be only delimitations of simple (one element) regions of homogeneity.
subjective. They are defined anthropocentrically: both the area and its limits are viewed through the eyes of man and conceived in terms of human concepts of life. “Any attempt to divide the world involves subjective judgment. . . . A map of ‘natural regions’ or of ‘regions based solely on natural elements’ with reference to mosquitoes, would be entirely different from one made with reference to sequoias. . . . Needless to say, all such divisions by geographers have been made with reference to man’s point of view—nature as man is concerned with it.”\(^{46}\) Moreover, man’s judgments of areas are colored by his particular culture. The criteria of definition for “natural” regions or landscapes are of one kind in an industrial society, of another in a society of primitive food gatherers, and again different among pastoralists, peasants, etc.\(^{46}\)

The political nature of boundaries, and the nature of politics itself, is much better understood by Haushofer than by Lapradelle. We may disagree with Haushofer’s classification of boundaries and boundary problems, or with the solutions he envisages,\(^{47}\) but this is a political disagreement, one which has its roots in the values we cherish and the concepts of state we hold. It is not possible to deny the validity of his assertion that boundaries are zones of frictions.\(^{48}\)

The boundary is a meeting place of two socio-political bodies, each having its particular interests, structure, and ideology. Each generates loyalties and also imposes duties and constraints for the sake of internal harmony and compactness and of external separateness and individuality. Two neighboring states do not need to be engaged continuously, or at any time, in a struggle for life and death. They may compete peacefully and, in general, minimize their conflicts of interest. Still, the very existence of the boundary is proof that there are some differences in ideology and goals, if not of a virulent present-day character then at least imbedded in the historical heritage. The French–Swiss boundary is certainly very peaceful. Yet, the political ideas and ideals, the ways of life, and the structure of society are very different in the two countries, and consequently no one advocates a Franco–Swiss merger or even federal union. If two neighboring political units pursue both theoretically and practically identical goals then the intellectual and physical communication across the boundary will be so intensive as to sweep it away. When Malta voted to join Great Britain, or Syria and Egypt merged, the community of thought and interest was able to overcome even geographical separation. The two Germanys are, in their own political will, one, but remain separated by a boundary which is that of superimposed political entities and supra-national integrating forces.

when they contrasted their okumene with the lands of the barbarians or the partibus infidelium. Contemporary writers who speak of cultural blocs are also implying such a differentiation. See Donald W. Meinig, “Culture Blocs and Political Blocs: Emergent Patterns in World Affairs,” Western Humanities Review, Vol. X, No. 3 (Summer, 1956), pp. 203–22.

\(^{47}\) Haushofer, op. cit., Chap. XV.

FRONTIERS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The example of Germany brings us face to face with the problem of the current reappearance of the phenomena of frontiers and frontier lands, but in a novel, less earth-bound, form. Whether we like it or not, boundary disputes, so dominant in international politics a generation ago, are fading away from diplomatic agenda. They are replaced in both urgency and importance by problems of a new kind of frontiers—frontiers of ideological worlds.

During the Middle Ages the development of clear-cut concepts of political entities and boundaries was hampered by two factors: one, the hierarchical system of feudal authority with its overlapping, divided, and often conflicting loyalties, and, two, the still lingering idea of the supremacy of a universal imperium (or sacerdotium) over the particular regnum—the lingering hope for a Christian Monarchia, a true Civitas Maxima. But after the fiasco of the religious wars the idea of sovereignty, combined later with the rising tide of nationalism, favored the emergence of national states with sovereign territory bound by an internationally recognized and inviolable boundary. With the adoption in 1918 of the principle of national self-determination, it was hoped that a stable international order with rule of law might be realized. However, any legal order is possible only if a certain socio-political maturity is attained, that is, if there is a general understanding as to the underlying values. Laws reflect the crystallization of the political community around a value system.

The Versailles-created system of quasi-law-regulated international order was based on a Western concept of justice, and, among others, on the assumption that loyalty to the nation and the nation state is the overriding loyalty. But new ideas sprang up and generated new values and new loyalties. Today, not only is the old consensus undermined, but the very concept of territorial law is challenged. "Proletarians have no fatherland" and "proletarians of all countries unite" are the best known but not by any means the only ideas which try to transgress on the territorially organized sociopolitical order. In the resulting confusion friends are sought in enemy territory, and enemies discovered among fellow citizens of the homeland.

Out of the religious wars emerged the belief that matters of faith and religious toleration should be an internal affair of the state: cuius regio eius religio. This, on the one hand, strengthened the hand of the sovereign in enforcing loyalty and a certain homogeneity of outlook among all the inhabitants of the realm, and, on the other, was a milestone toward the establishment of the principle of impenetrability of the state's territory which is the cornerstone of the concept of sovereignty and of the modern international system. And once this principle of impenetrability was recognized, it became possible for each state to develop its national law, the law of the land.

In our complex society, there is a great variety of limited loyalties, but the overriding loyalty of all is to our country. . . ." Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson, United States v. United Mine Workers, March 6, 1947.


Footnotes:
49 Boundary disputes, characterized by such a wealth of legal technicalities, played a major role only between the Congress of Vienna and 1914 (or 1933), that is, after Russia became Westernized and before the African and Asiatic (except for Japan since 1905) countries were accepted as equal members of the "civilized" family of nations. With the rise of Bolshevik and Nazi ideologies, and the emergence of new states with a non-Western cultural background, the community of thought, on which the voluntarily accepted rules of nineteenth century diplomacy rested, was wrecked. International politics abandoned legal and diplomatic finesse for a rather Hobbesian understanding of life, and it is interesting to note that while the Covenant of the League of Nations leaned on Locke's more peaceful and harmonious concept of society, the Charter of the United Nations is closer both to Hobbes' pessimistic understanding of human nature and to his concept of peace guaranteed by a powerful policeman. For a historical review of the East-West division and frontier in Europe prior to the Congress of Vienna, see Werner J. Cahman, "Frontiers between East and West in Europe," Geographical Review, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4 (October, 1949), pp. 605–24; see also H. Duncan Hall, "Zones of the International Frontier," Geographical Review, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 4 (October, 1948), pp. 615–25.
50 For instance, the present-day problem of the German-Polish boundary is overshadowed by the East-West ideological struggle although the territory in dispute is much larger than any which the Germans contested after the Versailles peace treaty. Even the classic contemporary case of a boundary dispute, the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, cannot escape being weighed on the international scene primarily in terms of its impact on the over-all competition between the Soviet and Western world view.
Under such circumstances the whole situation on the international scene, and often even on the national scene, retrogresses from a state of relative maturity, indispensable for the rule of law, into a state of unpredictability and fluidity. The concepts of sovereignty and boundary often become meaningless. The French Communist parliamentarians openly boast that “France is our country, but the Soviet Union is our fatherland.” The Soviet Union exercises, for all practical purposes, full sovereign rights in certain, not even contiguous, territories, e.g., Albania. Just as in pre-modern times all members of a tribe obeyed their tribal law regardless of which and whose territory they inhabited, so today all adherents of an ideology are urged to obey their ideological, and not the territorial law. Our national and international law system was possible because jus sanguinis was superseded by jus soli. It cannot survive if allegiance to a jus ideae (jus ideologi) takes roots.

One of the great difficulties of American foreign policy is that it tries to enforce clear-cut loyalties and territorial divisions in a world which is in flux. Those who accuse the State Department of being legalistically minded point out that law and order do not precede but follow from a certain general agreement as to the desired legal order. As long as such a consensus is wanting, politics are necessarily in a more primary, that is, pre-rule of law stage. Given the existing conditions, it is wiser to recognize that between the two great ideological ecumene certain “grey areas” of frontier lands, equivocal loyalties, and undefined allegiances, are unavoidable; perhaps not only unavoidable but even desirable: they permit mutual influencing and interpenetration in a broad border zone in which either of the two centripetal forces is too weak to integrate. The detachment of Yugoslavia or India is an offspring of centrifugal forces reacting against colonialism—of the Eastern and Western variety, respectively—but the two countries, having integrated into their systems certain characteristics from both camps, are areas of transition often much more valuable in our quest for international peace than the old buffer states.

Buffer states were a purely mechanical device of international politics: they separated physically two potential warriors, making it more difficult for them to exchange blows. The “grey areas” of the ideological frontiers of today are capable of a more sophisticated intellectual-political role. In contact with and willing to internalize currents from both poles, they are not merely transitive but also transformative: like an electrical transformer they adjust the tensions of the two political voltages to permit at least some flow of current.

To be sure, religious wars, for instance, were also ideological conflicts. But, as noted above (note 52), they took place prior to the crystallization of the principle of territorial law, and it was precisely their end that made possible this crystallization. Then, too, the contemporary ideological struggle is much more all pervading. Modern means of communication make it impossible, especially in our closed-space world, to seek isolation. A contemporary Puritan could not sail to a New World, settle on a terra nullius, and live his way of life protected by distance from “corrupting” influences. See also below, note 60.
without danger that flying sparks will fire the whole house. The clear-cut boundary between East and West would, on the contrary, accentuate and underline the differences and divisions, and tend thus to heighten the existing tensions. Besides, it could not prevent ideological influences from jumping a border line, however well- armored. The chain of military alliances from Greece to Pakistan—the so-called southern tier—was intended to seal off all of the Middle East from the Russians. But it has not. Sparks between Moscow and Cairo jumped our earth-bound defense line and established Soviet influence right in the center of the area. It is for this reason that the British

The “grey area” (“third”) countries of today should not be confused with either buffer states or old style neutrals. Buffer states were not only de facto not independent but often lacked a de jure sovereign status and seldom maintained direct diplomatic relations with the world at large. They were a “local affair”—a “private” geopolitical arrangement among the neighboring powers and as such not members of, or protected by, the international community as a whole. The old style neutrals, on the contrary, were full members of the international community but chose, of their own volition, to withdraw from active politics on the world scene. Such a withdrawal was officially announced and taken note of, and the neutrals’ status was protected and guaranteed under international law by all the states. The “third” countries of today are neither subordinate nor really neutral. They are powers actively engaged in international politics, and, though uncommitted (“neutralist”) in the East—West conflict, they have not withdrawn from—to the contrary, are active in—politics that affect that conflict. While an old style neutral, Switzerland, has refused to even join the United Nations, India and Yugoslavia strive to play an important role in that body.

F. Ratzel and R. Kjellén have stressed that all politics are erdgebunden (earth-bound). This is true. However, ideological politics are less so than politics based on a concept of sovereignty derived from property rights of the monarch or from a national group’s historical “rights” to and cultural roots in the soil. Ideas are, essentially, philosophical concepts abstracted from their empirical setting. Consequently, ideological frontiers are also less of a geographical (spatial) phenomenon than traditional frontiers were. They have been, so to speak, squeezed upward from the ground level to a less earth-bound level. Moreover, modern man is, in general, more literate and sophisticated, and as such less “geographical” and more intellectual. And “to the intellectual the frontier is not the land but the mind, and the Soviet leaders seem to understand this.” Jerome Wiesner, “Are Research and Technology the Soviets’ Secret Weapon?” in Soviet Progress vs. American Enterprise (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1958), p. 78.

would like to substitute for our legalistic and centralizing “boundary-seeking” foreign policy, a more pragmatic and looser “frontier-tolerating” foreign policy.

The present American attitude . . . is to regard all Communists as undifferentiated and untouchable, resolve to make the best of freedom in half a world, and man a rigid boundary, permanently vigilant . . . . To this conception Great Britain is bound to offer an alternative, less clear-cut but also less pessimistic. We have to look at fixing of the frontier, not as a final solution of our dispute with Communism, but as a step to the attainment of tolerable relations . . . .

The British are “less pessimistic” because they believe that a zone of interpenetration—a frontier of mutual influence—will not necessarily lead to Soviet gains; it may also work to our advantage. The British seem to have greater faith in the vigor and potential strength of the West, and in the attraction it may exercise.

Soviet leaders boast that Communist ideology spreads throughout the world “without visas and fingerprints” and that “revolutionary ideas know no boundaries.” This may be true, but, as we know, it does not mean that the Soviets do not have to face knotty problems on the frontiers of their own ideological ecumene. The case of Tito is most obvious. It is also most illuminating of the dilemma frontier versus boundary.

Though frontier conditions may sometimes be deliberately created by governments, the state tends to view frontiers and frontiersmen as a temporary expedient; as appropriate to a period of transition. The ultimate goal is a boundary, not a frontier. This is what the Chinese frontier policy of keeping the Chinese in and the barbarians out aimed at. Since

63 In terms of the ideological frontier of the Communist Party the Popular Front and fellow travelers are such a temporary expedient; they are semi-integrated and semi-independent border elements that belong only to the period of transition. The ultimate aim is complete integration within the bounds of the Party, or of the obedient citizenry of the communist state, while the unassimilable elements will be eliminated or literally bound (coerced physically).
64 Cf. Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers . . ., op. cit., pp. 470–73. See also above, note 26.
frontier conditions affect, and unsettle, the internal order and quiet, the state must, ultimately, either make an effort to integrate the frontier lands within its socioeconomic-political system—to enclose them within the state boundary—or, if it cannot be done economically or at all, to exclude them from its realm: put them beyond the pale of its community. This is something of the dilemma that has confronted the Soviet Union in its dealings with the satellites China and, especially, Yugoslavia.

On the one hand, it was desirable to keep Tito within the bounds of the Communist camp; on the other, given the fact that he was not willing, and could not be forced, to consider himself integrated within and bound to this camp, it was not possible to include him. Hence, despite all the disadvantages of having such a "barbarian" with ways of life (or, rather, ways of thinking) "Chinese" enough to attract not too loyal border elements, he had to be shut without the "Great Wall." Putting him outside the "boundary" Moscow acknowledged that Tito is a chieftain with whom one has to negotiate: he is beyond the line of control and command. In relation to the Iron Curtain, the Yugoslavians are like the seminomadic and semi-Chinese tribes which did not fit either within or without the Great Wall: they are the Hsiungnu of the Soviet empire.

CONCLUSION

The nature of frontiers differs greatly from the nature of boundaries. Frontiers are a characteristic of rudimentary socioeconomic relations; relations marked by rebelliousness, lawlessness, and/or absence of laws. The presence of boundaries is a sign that the political community has reached a relative degree of maturity and orderliness, the stage of law-abidance. The international society in a frontier era is

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65 Lattimore points out that every empire must ponder what effects different frontier policies—of strict integration or laxity and concessions—may have on the hinterland. Marginal imperial growth reaches the point of diminishing returns where the special interests of the borderlands can be neither cheaply overridden by, nor reconciled with, those of the imperial center. Further expansion will result not in centrifugal gain but in centrifugal loss of resources. Ibid., pp. 242-43.

66 For the very act of drawing a boundary is an acknowledgment that the peoples excluded are not under control and cannot be ruled by command. They must be dealt with by negotiation." Ibid., p. 243.

like the American West during open-range ranching: limits, if any, are ill-defined and resisted; there is little law and still less respect for law; and men afield do not always worry on whose territory or under whose jurisdiction they nominally are. Under a boundary regime the international society resembles rather fenced ranching: each rancher holds a legal title to his land, knows and guards its limits, and manages and surveys it with a view to some over-all end.

Both frontiers and boundaries are manifestations of socioeconomic forces, and as such are subjective, not objective. But while the former are the result of rather spontaneous, or at least ad hoc solutions and movements, the latter are fixed and enforced through a more rational and centrally co-ordinated effort after a conscious choice is made among the several preferences and opportunities at hand.

Boundaries are not boundaries of all political power. They are the limits of internal political power, that is, of the power which integrates the given political unit in the name of certain values and loyalties within the bounds of its territory as delimited under international law. External political power does not know territorial limits; it operates on the international scene. However, orderly international intercourse is possible only if it is, on the whole, a relation between legal governments: an encounter between the external governmental political powers. In other words, in order to have some stability in the political structure, both on the national and international level, a clear distinction between the spheres of foreign and domestic politics is necessary. The boundary helps to maintain this distinction.

It is a characteristic of contemporary, so-called ideological politics that it deliberately tends to blur the difference between foreign and domestic territory, and between internal and external politics, weakening thus the status and importance of boundaries. Governments, and nongovernmental organizations, bypass the legal channels in order to deal directly with peoples inhabiting terri-
tories under the jurisdiction of other governments. Supranational, non-national, and other loyalties and interests are promoted which integrate socio-political forces into unofficial or semi-official groupings and blocks transgressing upon the existing formal territorial arrangements.68

These groupings and blocks are neither fully incadrated by, nor responsible for, the ary. But the Bulgaro-Greek and the Soviet-Turkish boundary is a formidable obstacle: it is the Iron Curtain. And in Germany it is more difficult to cross the "boundary" between East and West Germany—de jure it is not even a boundary, only a demarcation line—than to cross the Franco-German or Belgian-German boundary.

68 Boundaries may be today better defined, marked, or even guarded, than at any other time in history. This is an outgrowth of the general technical, administrative and legal development. Private property boundaries and rights are also today better defined and delimited than a century ago. However, in this writer's opinion, the state boundary tends today to be less of a boundary than a few decades ago because, on the one hand, it binds less, and, on the other, it makes the state territory less impenetrable. Ideological and/or functional integration of foreign and upholding of law. On their fringes—the edges of communities of thought and culture—there are borderlands, frontiers, and frontiersmen. On the fringes of the ideological ecumene of our divided world unintegrated elements occupy shifting frontier zones. These zones are not the cause of international instability; they reflect the unsettledness of the contemporary human society.

domestic policies of different states transgresses upon boundaries. Franz Gschnitzer, Foreign Minister of Austria and professor at the Salzburg University, argues that boundaries in Western Europe have outlived their usefulness, that is, that they must disappear in so far as they are lines of division—walls between fully sovereign states—and can remain only as demarcation lines between administrative units similar to boundaries between counties, fiscal districts, parishes, etc.: "...europäische Binnengrenzen als Grenzen zwischen vollsouveränen Staaten sind längst überholt. Als trennende Schranken müssen sie verschwinden, nur noch als Ordnungs-, als Verwaltungsgrenzen sind sie berechtigt." F. Gschnitzer, "Gibt es noch Grenzen?" Aussenpolitik, Vol. IX, No. 2 (February, 1958), pp. 70-77; on p. 77. Compare with Khrushchev's statement (above, note 17) on the status of boundaries in East Europe.