

The Topology of Nation-State: Borders, Territoriality, Sovereignty and War

Ulus-Devletin Topolojisi: Sınırlar, Ülkesellik, Egemenlik ve Savaş

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Abstract

Borders have been embraced as a clear and unquestionable fact from the perspective of nation-states, which are the fundamental components of the modern international system that emerged with the Peace of Westphalia (1648). From the state's perspective, borders shaped based on territoriality along with the advent of the modern state are among the leading causes of war in international relations as areas of uncertainty, risk, and opportunity. When the states make their shared goals and problems in different periods be somehow linked to territoriality and/or borders, these problems make the states more prone to war. The findings from empirical research on this issue prove that particularly territorial contiguity (borders) is an essential factor at every stage of the use of force between states. One of the aims of this study is to reveal the relation between the concepts of "border" and "territoriality" with the modern state phenomenon. The second aim of the study is to shed light on the relationship between wars between states and the phenomena of "border" and "territoriality". For these purposes, first of all, in this study, addressing the phenomenon of territoriality and border in international politics from a historical and sociological perspective, this study examines the emergence of the phenomenon of the nation-state in the international system and the importance and relationship of the concept of "sovereignty," "territoriality," and "border" in the determination of the internal and external topology of the state; and accordingly, the relationality between the phenomena of territoriality and borders will be analyzed as the leading cause of inter-state wars.

Key Words: Border (s), War, Sovereignty, Territoriality, Nation-state, Peace of Westphalia

Öz

1648 Westphalia Barış Antlaşması'yla ortaya çıkan modern uluslararası sistemin temel yapıtaşı durumunda olan ulus-devletler açısından sahip oldukları sınırlar açık ve sorgulanmaz bir gereklilik olarak benimsenmiştir. Modern devletle birlikte ülkesellik esasına göre şekillenen sınırlar, devletler açısından belirsizlik, risk ve fırsat alanları olarak uluslararası ilişkilerde savaşın da en başta gelen nedenleri arasında yer almaktadır. Devletlerin çeşitli dönemlerdeki genel amaçları ve sorunları bir şekilde ülkesellikle ve/veya sınırlarla bağlantılandırıldığında bu sorunlar devletleri savaşa yatkın hale gelmektedirler. Bu konudaki ampirik araştırmalarda elde edilen bulgular, özellikle ülkesel bitişikliğin (sınırlar) devletler arasında kuvvet kullanımının her aşamasında önemli bir faktör olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışmanın amaçlarından biri, "sınır" ve "ülkesellik" olgularının modern devlet olgusuyla

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ilişkililiğini ortaya koymaktır. Çalışmanın ikinci amacı ise, devletler arası savaşlar ile “sınır” ve “ülkesellik” olguları arasındaki ilişkiye ışık tutmaktır. Bu amaçlar doğrultusunda çalışmada öncelikle, uluslararası politikada ülkesellik ve sınır olguları tarihsel ve sosyolojik bir perspektifle ele alınır, uluslararası sistemde ulus-devlet olgusunun ortaya çıkışı ve devletin “iç” ve “dış” topolojisinin belirginleşmesinde “egemenlik”, “ülkesellik” ve “sınır” olgularının önemi ve birbirleriyle ilişkisi incelenmektedir. İkinci olarak da, devletler arası savaşların temel bir nedeni olarak ülkesellik ve sınır olguları arasındaki ilişkililik analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sınır(lar), Savaş, Egemenlik, Ülkesellik, Ulus-devlet, Westphalia Barış Antlaşması

Introduction

Since the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which by most authors¹ considers as the birth of the modern international system, borders, as an indication of the nation-state(s)'s motive for existence and protection, has served as both the reason of state and a boundary that separates it from its equivalent. Borders, which function as lines and places that shape/give meaning to social and political life, as well as representing the area of *sovereignty* with the internal and external dimensions of the state, together with the changes and transformations that they have undergone in terms of both its meaning and functions, remain present as a geopolitical and socio-political phenomenon that continues to form physical, geographical, legal and political lines against the international area in the last three hundred and seventy years². From the 1990s, in a period when the classical perception of spatial-geography has experienced some change and transformation in the national, regional, and global context, although its classic meaning and functionality has now been deconstructed; borders, as a point of connection and power relationships of states and societies, remain a source of concern, stress, tension, uncertainty and conflict from a political, social, economic and military perspective in the 21st century.

From this point of view, one of the aims of this study is to reveal the relation between the concepts of “border” and “territoriality” with the modern state phenomenon. The second aim of the study is to shed light on the relationship between wars between states and the phenomena of “border” and “territoriality”. In this context, in this study, we will address the phenomenon of border and *territoriality* in international relations from a historical perspective, examine the emergence of modern “state” (nation-state) and the importance and relationship of the concepts of “border,” “territoriality,” and “sovereignty” in the distinction/confirmation of the “internal” and “external” topology of the state, and analyze the phenomenon of “border” and “territoriality” as one of the leading causes of interstate wars.

1 For example, Richard A. Falk, “The Interplay of Westphalia and Charter Conceptions of International Legal Order”, Cyril E. Black, Richard A. Falk (eds.), *The Future of International Legal Order*, Vol. I, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey 1969, pp. 32-70.

2 Servet Karabağ, *Jeopolitik Açından Sınırlar*, Gazi Kitabevi, Ankara 2008, p. 149.

A General Overview of the Phenomenon of “Border”

The concept of border, derived from the Greek word “*sínoron/sýnoros*,” refers to a point, linear or superficial zone.³ In other words, a border refers to concrete or abstract dividing lines. In the Turkish Language Association’s current dictionary, the concept of border is described in the following definitions:⁴ i) The line, frontier, separating the two neighboring states’ territories from each other. ii) The line separating the territory of neighboring provinces, districts, villages, or persons. iii) The ultimate line, point, where something can spread or expand. iv) The lowest and highest point, limit, where something can go down or up in quantity. v) A fixed size, limit, to which a variable size can come close as much as desired. vi) The frontier, end.

A border can be construed as a factor that separates facts or elements from each other. It can appear as an interface of at least two different environments, as well as exist as an external factor that separates any two environments from each other. In other words, borders refer to both an internal and an external system. In this context, borders can be both a bridge and an obstacle between spaces (the place that an object occupies in space), and crossing borders can be both stimulating and inhibitory, and may create opportunities, eliminate current opportunities, or create uncertainty. Likewise, borders are used to indicate differences and to make them noticeable.⁵ The existence of any border depends on its level of permeability. It is not likely to be able to mention a border in homogeneous environments. Because there is a quality difference and the expression of “obstacle” that makes this difference obvious for the concept of border; and the expression “limit” already means “not to allow/hinder.” The border also carries a definitive character. It allows to be evident in multi-option environments, and is the cause of rational choice. Thus, borders determine the degree of closeness (finished, completed its formation) to a fact, element, or entity. So in this sense, the border is another name for being able to create order, to continue without changing things as projected.⁶

Unlike Turkish, the concept of border is expressed in English with various concepts such as border, boundary, borderland/frontier, bordering, territory and territoriality, where the meaning is different from each other.⁷

3 Nişanyan Sözlük, “Sınır”, <https://www.nisanyansozluk.com/?k=sınır>, (Accessed June 30, 2021)

4 Türk Dil Kurumu Sözlükleri, “Sınır”, <http://www.sozluk.gov.tr>, (Accessed June 30, 2021)

5 Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson, *Sınırlar: Kimlik, Ulus ve Devletin Uçları* (trans. Zeki Yaş), Ütopya Yayınları, Ankara 2002, pp. 188-189.

6 Rivka Geron, “21. Yüzyılda Zaman ve Kimlik Bağlamında Algılanan Sınır Üzerine Bir İnceleme”, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, İstanbul 2004 (Yayınlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi), p. 1.

7 Alper Ekmekcioğlu, “Sınırların Kavramsal Çerçevesinin İncelenmesi ve Sınıflandırılması”, *Van Yüzyüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, Sayı: 52 (2021), s. 132.

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The concept of border is generally associated with three different concepts in the border studies literature: *Border*, *boundary*, and *frontier*. While *border* points to a line that definitively limits the area of a political entity's sovereignty, *boundary* indicates the extent where the political entity's authority and area of activity have last reached. *Frontier*, on the other hand, is used to describe the area in which the political unit heads towards and tries to exert influence outside its borders. In this context, while the phenomenon of *border* is a concept that becomes meaningful with reference to the sovereign nation-state and therefore is a modern era term, the concept of *boundary* reached significance mainly before the modern era, when empires were the main actor of the international system. The concept of *frontier*, however, has been used both in the world of sovereign nation-states and empires.⁸

According to Guo, "border refer as to a line in all these definitions. However, border sometimes has been defined as a narrow strip (or district or region) along or near the border between two areas. In addition, it is also usually defined as the part or edge of a surface or area that forms its outer boundary or the edge or boundary of something, or band or pattern around the edge of something, or the part near it. In some unusual cases, border also refers as to 'the frontier of civilization'."⁹ Whether a border is territorial or socio-political, it is both a political and sociological phenomenon. Because the concept of border anyhow derives its significance and function from the people it splits and from the political units (state) that it separates. In other words, almost all kinds of borders (physical, geographical, social, political, ideological, etc.) functions as the primary device of categorization. In this context, whether the borders are natural, artificial, or mental; they are all historical.

Drawing/forming borders is no doubt an act that has existed since very ancient times. In the historical process, border-building activities have emerged, especially with the beginning of social life (transition to settled life/transition from hunter-gatherer to agricultural societies) and the formation of political authorities, and have been shaped and determined depending on the conditions of the relevant period. In this framework, the first of the developments affecting the formation of borders is the determination of the final line or spatial area of the political or military forces, as is rarely encountered today.¹⁰ Although the act of forming borders is routine human activity, the qualities and processes of the building of borders have diversified remarkably over time from a social and political standpoint, leading to the

8 See Ali Aslan, "Modern Dünyada Sınırlar", *Anlayış Dergisi*, Issue: 74 (2009), p. 42, <http://www.anlayis.net/makaleGoster.aspx?dergiid=74&makaleid=2079>, (Accessed June 30, 2021); Ferhat Tekin, *Sınırın Sosyolojisi: Ulus, Devlet ve Sınır İnsanları*, Açılım Kitap, İstanbul 2014, pp. 71-75.

9 Rongxing Guo, *Cross-Border Resource Management*, Elsevier, Amsterdam 2021, p. 4.

10 Rongxing Guo, *Cross-Border Management: Theory, Method and Application*, Springer, London 2015, p. 15.

formation of different types of borders. Although some of these appeared before the modern state in the early ages (site/city-states) and the Middle Ages (Roman Empire), determining borders based on the *territory* is an entirely modern phenomenon, and the fact that they are perceived today as hard and sharp lines are also wholly peculiar to the modern nation-state.¹¹ According to Guo, stated that the border or boundary refers to limiting an area of definition and political living spaces it has a broader meaning in political issues and economic geography of the frontier although both usually refers to cases particularly from the border boundary to divide the sovereignty of independent states. “When two independent states, regions, communities, cultures or even firms meet together, a common border will be automatically formed. In general, borders can be classified into different levels, including first-class (or independent state) borders, second-class (or dependent state, or provincial) borders, third-class (or municipality, county) borders and so on.”¹² As Thomas B. Bottomore pointed out, the most prominent political unit in the modern world is the modern nation-state, and the main element that distinguishes the modern nation-state as a political unit from the Pre-Westphalian state is no doubt sovereignty and its extensions; that is, borders and *territoriality*.¹³

State, Territoriality and Borders: The Topology of “Internal” and “External”

The word “state” (*staat* in German) derives from the Latin word “*status*.” The use of this concept in the Middle Ages became associated with either the status of a state or a ruler, or with the status of a country. In the Middle Ages or early modern period, there were no thoughts regarding a separate public power from the ruler and those governed as the highest political authority in a given country. Initially, the phenomenon and concept of personal sovereignty, or of sovereignty dependent on persons, of communities or a monarch, existed.¹⁴ But then, envisioning that sovereignty would be not only over individuals but also over a particular territory, this modern concept aroused from its use in the Middle Ages in the 16th century first developed in France and then in England. This is because the two mentioned countries are the early examples of having the characteristics that make up the modern state, as a centralized regime based on a functioning bureaucracy within precise borders.¹⁵ Until the 16th century, the word “border” originally meant the front of a building or the frontline of an army (*boundary* and *frontier*). How-

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11 Ferhat Tekin, “Sınırlar, Bölgesel Kimlikler ve Ümmet Tasavvuru”, *Milel ve Nihal İnanç, Kültür ve Mitoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi*, Cilt: 9, Sayı: 3 (2012), p. 158.

12 Guo, *op. cit.*, 2021, p. 9.

13 Thomas B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society*, Routledge, London 1987, p. 59.

14 Karl Doehring, *Genel Devlet Kuramı* (trans. Ahmet Mumcu), İnkılâp Kitabevi, İstanbul 2002, p. 22.

15 Colin Flint and Peter J. Taylor, *Siyasi Coğrafya: Dünya-Ekonomisi, Ulus-Devlet ve Yerellik* (trans. Fulya Ereker), Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık, Ankara 2014, p. 136.

ever, in the 16th century it began to mean the limits or frontiers of a particular place and has since then been associated with the borders of the state.¹⁶ Thus, the dominant type of power that developed in Europe after the 16th century perceived space as a border. The concept of *border*, which draws bold and enclosed lines between societies, represents the understanding of the border that dominates the modern states system. It is not surprising that when we speak of the border, the state comes to mind first. Because it is often difficult for people to imagine a world that is not regulated by states and does not involve states. Modern states are -one way or another- the most critical, fundamental parts of the world that we accept without question, and we rarely question their existence. Even states can be regarded as if they were natural. On the contrary, states are purely historical human works, even the oldest of which dates back nearly four centuries to reach its current form and borders.¹⁷ According to Gianfranco Poggi, states are artificially created structures rather than spontaneously developed structures. They are a consciously constructed framework. In other words, “The modern state is not bestowed upon a people as a gift by God, its own *Geist*, or blind historical forces; it is a ‘made’ reality.”¹⁸ Every state is in an environment where other states exist and compete with them. This set of states forms a system with fundamental differences from the multi-headed, semi-sovereign parts of the empires in antiquity. The modern system of states consists of sovereign units side by side. States do not assume the international system, they create it. In this system, due to the internal logic of the political universe, it is “open at the top”, coincidental and inherently dangerous.¹⁹

Within the international system, states build themselves to a certain degree, and to some extent, are the product of competition and sometimes of a violent anarchic environment. The easiest way to understand the idea of mutual construction of the state and the international system is to consider the state in a broader sense at the crossroads of territorial-political-social (country-sovereignty-population).²⁰ The fact that states take different forms is based on a combination of current and past specific economic, social and political forces in their territories.²¹ As Joel S. Migdal pointed out, a new state did not act so in an extraordinary isolated way when the complicated historical events took place; but on the contrary, it emerged with a small number of similar political entities with which they formed a new state system together

16 Mark Neocleous, *Devleti Tahayyül Etmek* (trans. Akın Sarı), NotaBene Yayınları, Ankara 2015, p. 168.

17 *Ibid.*, pp. 118-119.

18 Gianfranco Poggi, *Modern Devletin Gelişimi: Sosyolojik Bir Yaklaşım* (trans. Şule Kut, Binnaz Toprak), İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, İstanbul 2019, pp. 116-117.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

20 Barry Buzan, *İnsanlar, Devletler & Korku: Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Uluslararası Güvenlik Çalışmaları İçin Bir Gündem* (trans. Emre Çıtak), Uluslararası İlişkiler Kütüphanesi-Röle Akademik Yayıncılık, İstanbul 2015, pp. 67-68.

21 Flint and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

and these together formed a system. The state's exceptional advantage and legitimacy in mobilizing and organizing resources for war and other purposes compared to other political entities (holding a monopoly of legitimate use of violence) overshadowed the survival of other political forms.²² As a matter of fact, the fact that Max Weber put this element in the center of his famous definition in order to emphasize the "holding a monopoly of legitimate use of violence" only to emphasize the state's specificity points to this fact. According to Weber, who defines the state as "a human community that has holding a monopoly of legitimate use of violence on a certain piece of land", the modern state can be defined especially through its specific tools. In this framework, the state as a political community has three basic elements. These; i) an orderly organization of management, expressed as bureaucratization, ii) this administrative organization has holding a monopoly of legitimate use of violence, iii) the aforementioned monopoly of legitimate use of violence, which also refers to the border element, is valid over a certain geography.²³ In this framework, holding a monopoly of legitimate use of violence manifests itself in two ways: One which emphasizes primarily what we may call the "internal" uses of organized violence -law enforcement, the repression and suppression of threats to the public order by the police and the judicial system- and one which emphasizes its "external" uses -war and the military establishment-.²⁴

As socio-political institutions or structures, both the nation and the state are sui generis in terms of their form of interaction with area/space. The extensional position of state and nation is a natural part of their existence. A state, as space, is established on a determined piece of territory. In this context, a state usually stakes out a claim that a particular land belongs to it, and this piece of land is called the state territory, in other words, homeland. Homeland takes on meaning solely with the community who live on it and strive to protect and maintain it. Thus, while it seems possible to think of a person without a state in some way, it is not likely to think of a state without humans and a homeland.²⁵ In this context, states dominate the earth in the modern world. Therefore, every habitable piece of land is part of the territory of one state or another. The idea of space on earth refers specifically to the notion of state.

The sovereignty and administration of a specific space, regarded as a land-based chamber that is needed to be captured by a political device, first

22 Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and the State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey 1988, p. 21.

23 Max Weber, *Sosyoloji'nin Temel Kavramları* (çev. Medeni Beyaztaş), Bakış Yayınları, İstanbul 2002, p.110; Max Weber, *Sosyoloji Yazıları* (çev. Taha Parla), İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul 2004, p. 132; Max Weber, *Ekonomi ve Toplum* (çev. Latif Boyacı), Yarı Yayınları, İstanbul 2012, p. 268.

24 Gianfranco Poggi, "Theories of State Formation", Kate Nash, Alan Scott (eds.), *The Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford 2004, p. 99.

25 Ramazan Özey, *Siyasi Coğrafya*, Aktif Yayınevi, İstanbul 2016, p. 2.

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appeared in Europe during the same period when the concept of the state came into prominence. The “state” is actually a mixed etymological term that combines the roots of the word “*estate*,” referring to the rights of land and property over the particular territory, with the word “*status*,” referring to the authority and rights being associated with a particular position. In the earliest form of the term, the state was thought to represent the property rights of sovereign monarchs embodied in absolute sovereignty in the form of a territorial object. In Feudal Law, the same word, that is, the word *dominium/dominion*, represented both the sovereignty of property and lord. Sovereignty also encompassed a combination of the words “land/space (*domain*) and power (*domination*)”. Thus, as a form of property right, sovereignty is the highest, exceptional property right that brings together both all property rights and possession. Therefore, the roots of the modern state are not based on mere sovereignty, but on certain property rights, in which sovereignty forms a separate party. For this reason, the state considers a particular area as its property, even including the people living in it.²⁶

The word “territory” took its current meaning in the 15th century and was defined as the mainstay of a political body organized under the management of an administrative structure as part of a geographical space that coincides with the spatial realm of authority of a government. In this sense, territory is often mentioned as the “bond between space and politics.”²⁷ Because, in its natural state, there is no political space, but whether it is limited to “absolute authority” (Thomas Hobbes), “private property” (John Locke), or “general will” (Jean J. Rousseau), the social contract makes such a political space possible while creating a civil society. The political space that evolved in this way not only separate the modern form of government from feudalism, but also separated it by creating a territorial basis in which constitutional discourse and political change can occur.²⁸ Therefore, the borders of states also reflect both the practice environment and a certain ideological and cultural accumulation of the order of that state. Therefore, borders form the lines of “foreignness” and “exclusion” by defining an international order separated by property administrations/states with their own identity.²⁹ In other words, borders rejects as well as erects othering. This paradoxical character of bordering processes whereby borders are erected to erase territorial ambiguity and ambivalent identities in order to shape a unique and cohesive order, but thereby create new or reproduce latently existing differences in space and identity.³⁰

26 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-168.

27 Jean Gottman, “The Evolution of the Concept of Territory”, *Social Science Information*, Vol. 14, Issue: 3 (1975), p. 29.

28 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

29 Karabağ, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

30 On this subject, see Henk van Houtum and Ton van Naerssen, “Bordering, Ordering and Othering”, *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (February 2002), pp. 125-136.

Obviously, the notion of “homeland” in the life of the individual, society, and state is based on both the physical and symbolic organization of space and therefore results in the fact that the belonging that binds the territory, the individual, and the state is different from the others.³¹ The idea of the homeland admits from the beginning the impulse of devotion to the territory, which is inherent in the modern state. The notion of territory derives from *terra* (from the earth and thus from the sphere of influence), but also from *terrere*, meaning “to frighten, deter,” and *territorium*, meaning “a place/private land where people are forbidden.” However, the notion of “region” derives from *regere* (*administer*), in Latin, which evokes military power. Therefore, the territory is a place that is held and maintained by the use of terror, or violence, while the region is a place that is governed by force.³² Therefore, all borders on earth essentially reflect the power policies of their creators. As a matter of fact, the secret that lies in territorial integrity is violence; in other words, violence is essential in terms of the pressure and the creation of borders necessary for the production of space. Because sovereignty does not only require space, it also necessitates a space (a space established and created through violence) where violence is directed, whether implicitly or explicitly.³³ To be more precise, the state’s key point, in the final analysis, is the physical pressure and violence used, while controlling a territory. Because without physical pressure/military dominance and violence, it is pointless to make any claim over a territory.³⁴ In this context, the incessant formation of constituent violence and means of violence (in Weberian parlance, “holding a monopoly of the use of legitimate force”) remains the hallmark of the state.

In the final analysis, the practical outcome of the relationship between the state and the territory is that the earth’s surface -according to the modern state’s ambitions based on the territory- is constantly embroidered. According to Henri Lefebvre, space in the modern sense is not only the backdrop of political life, but the domain of the political and social itself. Politics is realized in space, because the social construction of space itself is a political process. In this political process, the state(s) build a “*physical*” space and a “*discursive space*.” If there is no such combination of sovereignty, space, and politics, the state will lose its meaning.³⁵ In this sense, it is likely to mention that the statist political imagination is, of course, an imagination based on territory. Therefore, territorial and state power (sovereignty) is a mutually

31 Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1991, p. 9.

32 William E. Connolly, “Tocqueville, Territory and Violence”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 11, Issue: 1 (1994), pp. 23-24; Anssi Paasi, “Territory”, John A. Agnew, Katharyne Mitchell, Gerard Toal (eds.), *A Companion to Political Geography*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Oxford 2003, p. 110.

33 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith), Blackwell Publishing Ltd., Oxford 1991, p. 280.

34 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

35 Lefebvre, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-38.

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constituent, thereby helping the state to be understood or imagined as an organic body.³⁶

It is acknowledged that the state essentially covers a specific piece of land and population, but uncertainties frequently arise too. Although small-scale uncertainties are pretty common, the borders of the state tend to be fixed at any point over time, but are not restricted in the course of history in the long term.³⁷ Whether they are formed naturally or by agreements, borders, as a whole, are integral instruments of state sovereignty and national security.³⁸ As a result, because the state is based purely on a physical basis, the protection of the country and its population is considered a major national security issue for states, although sometimes borders can be largely sacrificed to protect other components of the state.³⁹ Thus, the second characteristic of state unity is that it is a dominant political entity in and outside of the country.⁴⁰ In this context, one of the preconditions that form the basis of the authority and unity of the state since the very beginning is that this highest authority in each independent area of sovereignty is welcomed⁴¹ as an object of law-making power and loyalty in such a way that it has no adversaries on its territory, and that this highest authority is in a politically and legally equal situation with other states in its relations with them, without being dependent on any state, in other words, it is sovereign inside and outside. The claim of sovereignty makes the state like the superior form over the community and explains the centrality of the state in political analysis. On the other hand, although the states in the world share some common characteristics, there are still differences within these features. For example, differences between states on issues such as size, power, physical geography, relative position, the nature of the population, resources, and internal political, economic, and social structures, and the level of independence are apparent. Perhaps based on this difference, even sovereignty, which has traditionally been considered a fundamental defining characteristic of being a state and is therefore identical for all states, has not actually evenly (or horizontally) been distributed.⁴² On the contrary, the image in power relations, in which sovereignty is directly reflected in the international system, is hierarchical, that is, vertical. Based on this fact, sovereignty is the basic rule of inter-state relations, because it determines the units that would be involved in the game.⁴³ As it was in the past, it is also improbable today to be sovereign

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36 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

37 Buzan, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89; Flint and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124.

38 Kari Laitinen, "Geopolitics of the Northern Dimension: A Critical View on Security Borders", *Geopolitics*, Vol. 8, Issue: 1 (2003), pp. 20-21.

39 Buzan, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

40 Ali F. Başgil, "Devlet Nedir?: Realist Bir Tarif Denemesi", İstanbul Üniversitesi *Hukuk Fakültesi Mecmuası*, Cilt: 12, Sayı: 4 (1946), p. 987.

41 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

42 Buzan, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

43 Alan James, "Sovereignty: Ground Rule or Gibberish?", *Review of International Studies*,

only by declaring itself sovereign. Sovereignty has never been related to a single state. On the contrary, sovereignty is an inter-state arrangement, that is, the constituent/founding norm of the international system. Sovereignty provides states with an international power in the international system.⁴⁴

A defined territory is also complementary in international law in terms of recognizing a state as a natural person. In modern terms and practice, sovereignty –as emphasized by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri⁴⁵– is absolutely established based on the border. This sovereignty requires a new type of political geography that allows neither intersecting borders nor various powers. The existence of embassies is just because of the dependence on this exclusionary territory. After states created mutually exclusive territories, they recognized that there was little space left for diplomacy, and had to mutually allow the formation of small foreign sovereignty islands (embassies) within the state’s territory.⁴⁶ In this regard, the paramount significance of the fact that the territory, in other words, the country as a whole, is an indispensable part of the state, is the essential role that this component plays in determining the boundaries of its sovereignty areas with other states. The country has, therefore, an important place in the existence of the state. Some critical issues, such as the clarification of the concept of citizenship and defining the country’s borders, are not only the rights of states, but also part of their international obligations.⁴⁷

A world of sovereign states and an international system is a world divided by borders, and an international system that can exist by borders. For this reason, the ontological formation of modern international politics is based on the “states system.”⁴⁸ Borders refer not only to the area of sovereignty of states, but also to the global order. In the historical process, almost every state has tended to physically expand and narrow down in its own “close perimeter security circle” (an area composed of areas and states adjacent or close to the country’s borders). This means that the state is a geopolitical entity based on territory. States are defined by borders; they never stop being active and exerting influence in the international arena, the “outside,” however. The fact that states are geopolitical entities, as well as polit-

Vol. 10, Issue: 1 (1984), p. 2.

44 Flint and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

45 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *İmparatorluk* (trans. Abdullah Yılmaz), Ayrıntı Yayınları, İstanbul 2001, p. 183.

46 Neocleous, *op. cit.*, pp. 169-170.

47 Doehring, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

48 As with the case of political geography as a whole, border studies were influenced by the Theory of World Systems developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, especially by the idea of the interdependence and the role of spatial scales. The World System Theory is based on a classical geographical triad “centre–semi-periphery–periphery.” This concept means, first, a need to study boundaries at three territorial levels –the global, the national and the local. Second, it means that the notions of “centre” and “periphery” are relative. See Vladimir Kolossov, “Border Studies: Changing Perspectives and Theoretical Approaches”, *Geopolitics*, Vol. 10, Issue: 4 (2005), pp. 606-632.

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ical and social entities, makes them eager to shape the international system in which they act in line with their own interests. In order to overcome this contradiction, states are turning towards the “outside” based on the concept of *frontier* and trying to expand their realm of political, economic, and cultural activity without physically expanding the areas of sovereignty. This fact suggests that borders also reveal geopolitical codes. Geopolitical codes (local, regional and global) are functional codes that contain a set of political geographical assumptions underlying a country’s foreign policy.

Borders create a topology in which each state is defined in terms of “internal” and “external.” In other words, the concept of border carries two distinct areas of meaning in terms of the domain of a political community; one positive, which defines introverted sovereignty, and the other negative, which defines the boundary of extroverted sovereignty.⁴⁹ Therefore, the fundamental nature of the state involves two relationships that we can call “looking inside” and “looking outside.” The first one concerns the state’s relationship with society and the social, political, legal, and economic activities occurring within the country. The second one is related to the state’s relationship with the interstate system of which it is a part. It is the same state that operates simultaneously in both these areas, facing both in and out.⁵⁰ In other words, states spatially face society inwardly and the interstate system outwardly. In the same way, individuals are also mentally and actively positioned in the world system; according to who and where they are (identity/us), and who and where they are not (other/foreign). Nation-states define the dimensions of time and space of the societies to which they belong, “imagined communities”⁵¹ as Benedict Anderson defines them; and the power of the nation-state, which is the main center of politics in the modern world system, lies here. Therefore, the borders of nation-states have been built both socially and politically. As highly-functional phenomena, especially in terms of nationalism, the ideology of the nation-state, borders function as a fundamental instrument that distinguishes a national cultural identity built in a specific territorial area from the “other”/“foreign.”⁵²

The underlying legal basis of the modern inter-state system has been achieved through the incorporation of sovereignty and country (territory). Also from a systemic standpoint, states must be regarded as territorially defined socio-political entities. What constitutes a state, from the most, if not all, of the main goals of interaction within the international system, is the connection of the “country-sovereignty-population.” As stated in the UN Charter, the view of the political-territorial state is now a universal norm reg-

49 Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye’nin Uluslararası Konumu*, Küre Yayınları, İstanbul 2012, p. 8.

50 Flint and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-120.

51 Benedict Anderson, *Hayali Cemaatler: Milliyetçiliğin Kökenleri ve Yayılması* (trans. İskender Savaşır), Metis Yayınları, İstanbul 1995, p. 20.

52 Tekin, *op. cit.*, 2014, p. 247.

ulating the relations of states with each other. This norm, as a process, arose after 1494 and was completed by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). With the Treaty of Westphalia, which is also interpreted as the first treaty to define/lead to modern international law, each state has been recognized as sovereign in its own country on the basis of the “principle of sovereign equality” (that is, no state can be politically and legally superior to another state). This means that interference in the internal affairs of a state is considered to be a violation of international law (the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the states).⁵³ With both the norm of non-interference in internal affairs and its ontological fact, borders point to the extreme points of state sovereignty, at which the control over subjects and citizens, who can be ruled by power or the threat of power, can reach.⁵⁴

Borders also have common functional characteristics with other borders in the world. In other words, borders essentially are where two or more states meet and interact, and this interaction makes it possible for the border to be a transit zone between them.⁵⁵ Hence, we can state that the central and traditional role of state borders in terms of national security is primarily based on protection from military threats. Second, “border belt security” means the control of border crossings. In this context, borders are the front lines that prevent illegal movements, such as unwanted individual/group attempts to breach the property structure of states, product inflows, and so on. Third, another aspect of addressing state borders from the national security perspective is anticipating possible problems for the state and taking precautions in advance. Fourth, the concept of borders as a firewall is essentially based on its security towards the fundamental tasks of the state.⁵⁶

Finally, there is another implication that the phenomena of territoriality and sovereignty are treated as the basis of international law: States have become collective individuals to be based on shaping international law. For this reason, the rights of states have always been a priority over other institutions.⁵⁷ However, although today’s national and international rules of law have made a state’s authority over its territory be based on pretty solid grounds, the problems and debates on by which right the state power and old institutions on this issue are legitimized on the ruled territory continue to be considerable. Almost all of the traditional views recognized authority

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53 As an argument against the widely accepted conception of the significance of Westphalia in the literature in the context of the “principle of sovereign equality” and the “principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states”, Benno Teschke’s work, may be given as the unique perspective from the historical sociology point of view in recent years. See Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics and the Making of Modern International Relations*, Verso Books, London 2003.

54 Donnan and Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

55 Osman Gümüşçü, “Siyasi Coğrafya Açısından Sınırlar ve Tarihi Süreç İçinde Türkiye’de Sınır Kavramı”, *Bilgi Türk Dünyası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, Issue: 52 (Kış 2010), p. 83.

56 Karabağ, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

57 Flint and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

over the country as a sign of state power in the international arena. This idea was especially prominent during the transition period from the 19th century to the 20th century. But today, there are pretty controversial legal judgments on the points of origin on which these views are based. The fact that sovereignty over the country is absolute today has become quite relative in terms of the legal structures of many states to a certain extent. According to Karl Doehring, this cannot be explained only by the obligations imposed by international conventions and by the fact that the principle itself undergoes a process of regular change. This change essentially stems from the tendency of limiting sovereignty over the country by treaties due to inter-state relations becoming extremely intensified and the implications of putting international and supranational organizations into effect by conventions. The rules of law regulating the state's rights over its territory vary today much more than before the Second World War. The state territory is now regarded as an area where international obligations would also be fulfilled.⁵⁸ In particular, in situations where international law requires to act in accordance with human rights, no state can exhibit an attitude against these principles solely by asserting its rights over the country; and even if it does so, it is clear that this would bring responsibility in the international arena. All of this shows us that a state's sovereignty over its territory is no longer limitless today, sovereignty is now not only considered a right in the international arena, but regarded as a right that brings responsibility as well.

The Change/Transformation of the Concept of “Border” in the Process of Globalization, and the Nation-State

Recent developments affecting the nation-states, thereby the borders, are developments on a local and global scale, which can be defined as supranational and subnational. In light of all these facts, we can point out four crucial factors/situations playing a pivotal role in borders becoming the focus of attention again today:⁵⁹ i) The fall of the Berlin Wall and the disappearance of the East-West divide. ii) Redefinition of ethnic identities and domestic violence. iii) Effects of the globalization process. iv) Emergence of environmental risks that transcend state boundaries. It is a fact that the nation-state structure and the nation-state system are affected by the globalization process in two ways. The first is that the increasing interdependence in the world with globalization encompasses nation states from above and undermines the stability of national formations to a greater or lesser extent. The second is the rediscovery of the identities of local peoples and groups within nation-states, driven from below, by the impact of globalization.⁶⁰

58 Doehring, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

59 Anssi Paasi, “Boundaries in Globalizing World”, Kay Anderson, Mona Domosh, Steve Pile, Nigel Thrift (eds.), *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, Sage Publications, London 2003, p. 462.

60 Abdül S. Çelikçi, “Soğuk Savaş Sonrası Dönemde Ulus Devlet ve Milliyetçilik: Küreselleşme Çerçevesinde Ulus Devlet ve Milliyetçilik Tartışmaları”, *İmgelem*, Cilt: 5, Sayı: 8

Harmut Behr points out that in the process of globalization, states face two major problems. These problems, also called the “paradox of globalization,” are the “*detrterritorialization*” and the “*transformation of statehood*.”⁶¹ This result achieved with the attribution to global developments has also led to some trends at the issue of border. In today’s world, borders seem more permeable than in the past. In this regard, nation-states experience difficulties in performing their traditional functions, and global elements have more significant influence over decisions made by governments. In addition, it is also claimed that globalization has detrterritorialized identity, as ethnic and national groups have established interactions that transcend territorial boundaries and even intermingle with other identities. Thus, the complicated global-local relationship, which is a characteristic of globalization, has shaken this great discourse of nationalism and has begun to make more complex multiple identities possible. All these developments have brought with them discussions that borders are about to disappear and lose their significance within the framework of discourses such as “the age of nation-states is ending” and “the world without borders.”

Today we are actually experiencing a “time-space” compress on a global scale and social relations between national political borders are affected by this reality. In this context, uncertainty has begun to be experienced in “time-space” systems. Nevertheless, globalization has contradictorily brought with it the tendencies of conflict, and borders have gained importance in this process. So even in the age of globalization, the borders are serving as the outpost line of nation-states and continue to represent the people living within these borders. That is, globalization is never expected to lead to a “world without borders” or a world devoid of national borders. Because globalization needs divided spaces, so capital can only move freely and be guaranteed between legally different spaces created in states or regions. Without belonging to a state, it is not possible to regulate the exchange between ethnic or state property and the outside world. The dynamics of national identity rested on borders are still strong and continue to be an important political element. Therefore, nation-states are still the crucial actors in the regulation and control of both the national and global economies.

As a result, the process of globalization following the post-Westphalian period has now opened the fact of borders for discussion in a national, regional, and global context since the end of the 20th century. In this context, many of the international borders are one of the focuses of new tensions and new opportunities in the process of change and transformation in response to the globalization of the economy and culture. In a period when the nation-state is considered to be in crisis to one extent or another, national bor-

(Temmuz 2021), p. 22.

61 Harmut Behr, “Deterritorialisation and the Transformation of Statehood: The Paradox of Globalisation”, *Geopolitics*, Vol. 13, Issue: 2 (2008), p. 360.

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ders or state borders cannot either fulfill their usual role absolutely as a place of protection and entry, or at least not as they did in the past.⁶²

Empirical Findings on the Relationship Between Territoriality/Borders and War

Some of the problems that collective groups can confront are prone to more violence than others. In this context, the primary source of conflict that is most likely to lead to war in the international system is territoriality, in other words, borders. From the time when human communities owned territorially surrounded spaces, the piece of territory/border where two states or societies converged has often been a potential source of conflict and strife. Territoriality has been the natural motivation of human instincts to invade and, if necessary, defend the land throughout history. This trend has deeply embraced humanity and become an essential part of its collective genetic heritage. For the most part of history, people have learned through their genetic heritage and culture that the best way to address territorial problems can lead to situations that require the use of force and violence. In other words, since the living categories are of territorial character, people can opt to fight for land. From the territoriality perspective, inter-state wars arise from the attempts of human communities to draw the boundaries of national units built based on their sustainability in terms of economic and prosperity. This element (territoriality) is vital in that it dramatically reduces the use of collective violence when lacking. This can explicitly be traced by looking at the history of conflicts and wars. There are many other problems between states, but a limited number of them with no link to territorial problems is likely to lead to a military conflict. Neighboring countries tend to be more concerned about each other's territorial ambitions compared to other countries. Therefore, if territoriality is the main element at the beginning of collective violence, then it should be expected that wars, rivalries, prolonged conflicts, and military disputes would unusually intensify between neighbors.⁶³

In the modern international system, and even long before it, the most likely crises that would result in war have been related to territorial problems, and especially to the problems of territorial contiguity (border). As a matter of fact, many of the interstate wars listed in the war correlations data presented in 1980 as part of the *Correlates of War Project (COW Project)*, which was launched by David Singer and Melvin Small in 1963, seems to have been experienced between neighboring countries. In this context, there were 67 inter-state wars between 1816 and 1980, all, but eight, of which were experienced between the neighbors. If excluded from this list are imperial wars/colonial wars, it would be seen that all wars in this period were between neighboring countries. This means that all inter-state wars between 1816 and 1980 were either between neighbors or involved a big state expanding

62 Donnan and Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

63 John A. Vasquez, *Savaş Bulmacası, Yeniden* (trans. Haluk Özdemir), Uluslararası İlişkiler Kütüphanesi-Röle Akademik Yayıncılık, Ankara 2015, pp. 135-136, 146, 153-154.

overseas; that is, this also has a territorial origin.⁶⁴ The historical evidence presented by Kalevi J. Holsti in *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order 1648-1989*, also shows that the most common causality in most wars is territorial problems. Examining the great wars from 1648 to 1989 by dividing into five standard historical periods (1648-1714, 1714-1814, 1815-1914, 1918-1941, and 1945-1989), Holsti found that during each period, territorial problems were the standardized problem among the major problems. In four of the mentioned five periods, most wars are linked to territorial problems (including border problems) rather than the other ones. Accordingly, it can be stated that 86% of the wars between 1648-1714, 83% of the wars between 1714-1814, 84% of the wars between 1815-1914, 93% of the wars between 1918-1941, and 79% of the wars between 1945-1989 occurred due to territorial and border problems.⁶⁵ (see Table: 1) These findings prove that for most of the modern international system, territorial rivalries (including the border) lead to war more than any other problem.

Table 1: Frequency of Wars Involving a Particular Issue (1648-1989)

Type of issue	Historical Periods				
	1648-1714	1715-1814	1815-1914	1918-1941	1945-1989
Territory	17 (77%)	26 (72%)	18 (58%)	22 (73%)	27 (47%)
Territoriality-related issues	2 (9%)	4 (11%)	8 (26%)	6 (20%)	19 (32%)
Subtotal cumulative	19 (86%)	30 (83%)	26 (84%)	28 (93%)	46 (79%)
Other issues	3 (14%)	6 (17%)	5 (16%)	2 (7%)	12 (21%)
Total number of wars	22	36	31	30	58

Source: Kalevi J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order, 1648-1989*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991, adapted from pp. 307-309.

64 Melvin Small and J. David Singer, *Resort to Arms: International and Civil Wars (1816-1980)*, Sage Publications, Inc., Beverly Hills 1982, pp. 82-95.

65 See for more information Kalevi J. Holsti, *Peace and War: Armed Conflicts and International Order (1648-1989)*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991, pp. 282-309.

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A groundbreaking study, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* by Lewis F. Richardson, a pioneer of empirical research on the issue, which found that territorial contiguity and the excess number of these contiguous borders (including colonial borders), enhance the likelihood of a state becoming involved in conflict/war; and numerous studies verifying this finding have shown that territorial contiguity is an important factor in the outset of the war; in other words, it is the main source/cause of the conflict that led to war. Calling any kind of conflict involving physical violence between humans “*deadly quarrels*,” Richardson builds an interesting analogy between war and murder. Based on statistical data, Richardson points out that foreigners are less likely to be killed in a country, while murders are committed by friends or relatives who interact with each other. Emphasizing that there would be experienced no problems among people without having interaction with each other, Richardson argues that murders are committed between people who have many opportunities to interact with each other (that is, people having close relations and communication both physically and socially); and likewise, he argues that wars take place between states with geographical proximity (border) and interaction with each other.⁶⁶ This analogy that Richardson made between war and murder is also supported by Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr. According to Most and Starr, the environment in which political and social units are placed creates or restricts opportunities for interaction for the units in question.⁶⁷ At this point, emphasizing the phenomena of borders and contiguity, Most and Starr suggest that geographical proximity enhances the interaction between states. In this context, the opportunities for interaction offered by the environment can be regarded as factors that enhance the likelihood of conflict between states in the international system. However, referring to their earlier studies, Most and Starr also emphasize that borders do not necessarily produce conflict or cooperation, but they do reveal opportunities⁶⁸ or risks that lead to more or less various interactions.⁶⁹

Some other studies in the international politics literature on the relationship between the state’s number of borders and its foreign policy behavior (especially in terms of its waged wars) have also found a direct correlation between war and territorial contiguity, based on a significant amount of da-

66 Lewis F. Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels*, Boxwood Press, Pittsburgh 1960, pp. 176-177, 273-288.

67 Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, “Diffusion, Reinforcement, Geopolitics and the Spread of War”, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 74, Issue: 4, 1980, pp. 932-946.

68 See Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, *Inquiry, Logic, and International Politics*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia 1989, pp. 31-70; Bekir Berat Özipek, “Savaşların Açıklanmasında ‘Fırsat ve İsteklilik’ Ön Kuramsal Çerçevesi ve Kullanım Alanları”, *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Cilt: 13, Sayı: 59 (2018), pp. 33-48.

69 Harvey Starr and Benjamin A. Most, “The Substance and Study of Borders in International Relations Research”, *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 20, Issue: 4 (1976), pp. 92-117.

ta-based evidence. For example, the study by Peter Wallensteen, in which he examined the wars between 1816 and 1976, identified contiguity as an essential factor associated with war. According to this study, 93% of contiguous big state couples had a military confrontation, and 64% of these couples experienced war, and on average, 85% of these couples had a military confrontation, and 55% experienced a war.⁷⁰ These findings provide substantial evidence that contiguity is both a source of military confrontation and conflict that causes war. A more precise proof has also been put forward by Paul F. Diehl. Diehl asserts that in long-term rivalries between powerful states, military disputes taking place contiguous to one of the rivals or in its territorial position are more likely to escalate than disputes arising from other interests. About a quarter of these disputes, that is, 12 out of 50 (25%), climbed to the level of war, while only one in 54 (2%) of disputes between non-contiguous countries escalated to the level of war. In addition, 12 of the 13 wars mentioned in Diehl's sample started from disagreements in which one or both of the parties' borders were contiguous, and this reveals that the problems in which contiguous countries were involved created an important environment for war between the rivals.⁷¹ Stuart A. Bremer's study, too, provides more conclusive evidence that the contiguity of the countries is a critical feature in terms of leading to escalating conflicts to the level of war. Bremer argues that of the seven theoretically important characteristics addressed in the literature that encourage war between the two states, the contiguity is by far the most decisive one. Accordingly, the likelihood of breaking out war between contiguous states is 35 times higher than in non-contiguous states.⁷² All these findings indicate that contiguity is almost a structural prerequisite for the start of a war between the two states.

When it is considered that borders create a restriction on the area in which states can exert influence, and foreign policy is a political activity⁷³ produced starting from borders, borders appear to be a geographical element that potentially facilitates conflict. Geographical proximity also plays a role in spreading conflict. One of the key variables at this point is how many countries a state is bordered with. It is potentially assumed that the more countries a state is bordered by, the more experience of conflict and war it would have.⁷⁴ The fact that most inter-state wars are experienced between neighboring countries means that territorial contiguity, that is, problems with respect to

70 Peter Wallensteen, "Incompatibility, Confrontation, and War: Four Models and Tree Historical Systems, 1816-1976", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 18, Issue: 1 (1981), pp. 57-90.

71 Paul F. Diehl, "Contiguity and Military Escalation in Major Power Rivalries, 1816-1980", *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (November 1985), pp. 1203-1211.

72 Stuart A. Bremer, "Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965", *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, Issue: 2 (1992), pp. 309-341.

73 Richard K. Ashley, "Foreign Policy as Political Performance", *International Studies Notes*, Vol. 13, Issue: 2 (1987), p. 51.

74 Paul F. Diehl, "Geography and War: A Review and Assessment of the Empirical Literature", *International Interactions*, Vol. 17, Issue: 1 (1991), pp. 11-27.

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disputes over neighboring lands, often lead to war. The tendency of people to occupy a particular territory and, if necessary, defend it, that is, territoriality is one of the key elements of understanding war. Since territorial disputes, and especially those involving contiguity characteristics, are more prone to war than others, it is seen as a fundamental cause of war. These can be considered fundamental for two reasons: First, they are fundamental because they initiate a sequence of events that would often result in war, rather than directly or inevitably lead to war. Because they are persistent problems, they tend to cause foreign policy practices in the modern international system, which can lead to a series of steps that lead to a war of power politics. Second, if the disputes over contiguous territory have been amicably resolved at a certain point in the historical period of the two states, the probability of breaking out of a war between these two neighboring countries is very low, regardless of what other problems may arise in the future. The fact that the existence of disputes over territorial contiguity makes war possible, while its absence makes war very unlikely, proves its causal significance.⁷⁵ Therefore, anything that links territorial disputes to war is influential in the spread of war, and territorial contiguity would likely play a role in this process.⁷⁶ All these findings and assessments point to two realities. The first one is territoriality; in other words, the problems associated with territoriality are one of the most fundamental and common causes of war, and it is also an essential dynamic that shapes world politics. The second one is borders, which are both an area of uncertainty and risk and an opportunity for states, and states with more borders are potentially facing the reality of experiencing more conflict and war.

Conclusion

International relations are based on the territorial sovereignty of the modern state, and the concept of border plays an essential role in this process. Since the emergence of the Westphalian international system, nation-states have still been the most influential political units at the local, regional and global levels as the most fundamental and powerful actors in modern international relations. In the process from its earliest forms to the modern nation-state form, the fact that the state, as a political unit, is the main actor in the cycle of peace and war throughout history is also very closely related to this reality. The emergence of nation-states as an entity with internal and external sovereignty on a territorial-political-social basis has become a universal norm that guides states' relations with each other for the last four hundred years.

Since sovereignty also requires permanent control of territorial borders, borders as a whole, whether created by natural means or by agreements

75 Vasquez, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 260. See also Randolph M. Siverson and Harvey Starr, "Opportunity, Willingness, and the Diffusion of War", *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 84, Issue: 1 (1990), pp. 47-60.

based on territoriality, function as an integral part of state sovereignty and national security. Because borders present opportunities or risks that cause more or less various interactions as the most distanced points at which mutually exclusive dominance converges, they have the potential to produce conflict or cooperation between states. Empirical findings on the relationship between territoriality, borders, and war show that rivalries, strife, and wars between states are mainly concentrated between neighbors. This result is not a coincidence, but instead reflects a fundamental reason for the nature of the state. Among all the issues that can be the reasonable cause of war, are the territorial ones that are most often associated with wars. States are more willing to fight for territory and for every land-related problem than they fight for any other problem. Territoriality makes the contiguous states' territories a fragile issue that can lead to conflict, long-term rivalry and/or war. Other problems, even if they may be the source of war, do not have this kind of effect. The findings from empirical research on this issue indicate that territorial contiguity, in particular, is an influential factor at every stage of violence and use of force between states. A tiny number of inter-state wars in history have been waged without any involvement in any territorial problems. It seems, therefore, that territoriality and, in particular, territorial contiguity (borders) seem to be the primary source of conflict that leads to war. The fact that most wars in world history took place between neighbors and states that were once in colonial rivalry support this phenomenon. Although territoriality and territorial contiguity function as potential factors that enhance states' tendency to go to war, it should not be overlooked that states must both have necessary opportunities and be willing to fight in order for a war to take place.

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