

Dimitri Endrizzi · Jairo Becerra ·
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Jaime Cubides Cárdenas ·
Laura Cecilia Gamarra-Amaya *Editors*

Frontiers — Law, Theory and Cases

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 Springer

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Dedication

To our dear friend Dimitri. Your wisdom and kindness will always be missed.

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List of Abbreviations

ACHR	American Convention of Human Rights
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
BIZ	Border Integration Zones
CAIC	Commission for the Integral Audit of Public Credit
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CAU	Council of the Central Asian Economic Union
CEDEGE	Committee of Development of the Guayas Rives
CLCS	Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
COPUOS	Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space
Court IHR	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
CSIRT	Computer Security Incident Response Team
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EES	Entry/Exit System
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zones
EU	European Union
FARC	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GO	Geostationary Orbit
IBWC	International Boundary and Water Commission
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
ICHR	Inter-American Commission of Human Rights
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ICWC	Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia
IGF	Internet Governance Forum
ILC	International Law Commission
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ISHR	Inter-American System of Human Rights
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

ITLOS	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
IWC	International Watercourses
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LME	Large Marine Ecosystem
MAC	Multinational Andean Companies
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NEP	North-East Passage
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NILE-COM	Council of Ministers of the Nile
NILE-TAC	Nile Technical Advisory Committee
NSR	North Sea Route
NWP	Northwest Passage
NYC	New York Convention
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OHCHR	Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
OMVS	Organization for the Exploitation of the Senegal River
RTP	Registered Travellers Program
SIRENE	Supplementary Information Request at the National Entries
SIS	Schengen Information System
SOGED	Diana Dam Management and Operation Agency
SOGEM	Manatali Dam Management and Operation Agency
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
U.S	United States
UKIP	Independence Party of the United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UN-WATER	United Nations Water
VIS	Visa Information System
WCIT	World Congress on Information Technology
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WGIG	Working Group on Internet Governance
WHO	World Health Organization
WSIS	World Summit on Information Society

As an Introduction: The Term ‘Frontier’ and Kindred Concepts



Dimitri Endrizzi

In 1962, the Canadian sociologist Marshall McLuhan spoke for the first time about the *global village*. This new expression appeared in perhaps his most famous book: *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962). It was taken up by the author in *Understanding Media* (1964) and used in the title of the book *War and Peace in the Global Village* (1968). In general terms, McLuhan’s concept of a global village is related to a substantial change generated mainly by the media. Images and sounds could be transmitted from and to any place of the world at any moment. Another topic debated by the author was the growing importance that these media products were playing in the daily lives of the inhabitants of our planet. The consequence was a change in our perception of the distances that divide us from other realities. Technology played an important role. The global village concept is drawn from the idea of a world community that was overcoming the barriers that traditionally have existed. A world community that, in some way, was transforming in a definitive way the frontiers that have divided humanity.

More than 50 years have passed since the appearance of the expression *global village*. The different processes that have characterized the phenomenon of globalization have influenced the shape of frontiers. Many things have happened, from the disappearance of perhaps the most famous frontier, the Iron Curtain, to the current European Union, where the borders among countries have become a distant memory. Humanity’s destiny has been characterized by the rupture of barriers: physical, economic, cultural. Nation-States, the institutions that, more than any other, have

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made the biggest mark in recent political history and that have been historically associated with the frontier concept, at least in its political connotation, have lost importance, delegating power, in different degrees and voluntarily, to supranational institutions and, in a way not so voluntary, to actors that have taken prominence in the international scenario, such as corporations, non-government organizations related with civil society, etc. Are we listening to the requiem of frontiers? In more recent times and, perhaps with astonishment, the outlook could be different. And if we consider the current health contingency related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the outlook may be even more different.

In 2016, researchers from the University of Quebec, Elizabeth Vallet, Zoe Barry, and Josselyn Guillarmou, published in *The Economist* a study regarding boundary walls and security fences between countries. The results were surprising. According to the authors, in 1989, perhaps the most emblematic date when we speak of knocked down frontiers, the fall of the Berlin Wall, there were 16 walls or fences in the world there were 16 walls or fences. 27 years later, on the date of publication of the study, the number had increased to 63, finished or in the project phase, involving 67 states. Globalization, considered as the ideal context to the progressive disappearance of the barriers that divided countries, turned out to be a process that has favored the birth of new fears in terms of security. Or, in other words, the unifiers impulses of globalization were not enough to counteract the isolationist drift. It is not important. What is worthwhile to highlight is that currently, a third of the countries in the world present wall or fence that divides them from neighboring countries. The most significant year was 2015, in which more barriers were built than in the previous 27 years combined.

Some specific situations are worth highlighting. Regarding the American continent, there are cases of the border between the United States and Mexico and between Mexico and Guatemala. The United States and Mexico share a border of approximately 3.200 km. There is a wall over 1.000 km long between both countries. Donald Trump—the President of the United States of America from January 20, 2017, to January 20, 2021—since the beginning of his Presidential term, it clear that he intended to continue building this controversial wall. Not very different, it is the situation between Mexico and Guatemala. An important part of the almost 900 km of the border, in the vicinity of populated areas, is occupied by a defensive fence, with the intention of decelerating the flow of irregular migrants into the Aztec country.¹

In Africa, there are currently 12 barriers between countries. The most emblematic are the electrified fences that divide Botswana from Zimbabwe, officially to stop the migrations of wild animals, and the one that separates Morocco from Western Sahara. It is a sand wall called *Berm*, the world's second-longest, surrounded by antipersonnel mines with the purpose of containing the insurgent group Front Polisario, active from 1973 in search of self-determination for Tuareg people.²

¹Vallet et al. (2014).

²Vallet et al. (2014).

Currently, Asia is the continent with the most barriers, 36, 29 of which have been built or planned in recent times, that is, from the year 2000 until the present time. In the Asian continent, there are historical divisions such as those that exist between China and Macao (1860) and between China and Hong Kong (1960). The most polemic is perhaps the wall built between Israel and the West Bank since 2002. It is worthwhile to mention the demilitarized area that nowadays separates North from South Korea, and the two mentioned the walls that separate Pakistan, respectively, from Afghanistan (2.400 km) and India (3.300 km).³

The European situation is no better. The old continent had, at the date of this investigation, 16 barriers, 14 of which didn’t exist before 2013. It is a phenomenon strictly bound to the great flow of refugees and their handling. Significant examples are the chain-link fence (175 km) that runs between Hungary and Serbia and the electrified barrier that divides the Spanish city of overseas Ceuta from the Moroccan territory. How can we forget the Green line, which without the same restrictions as the past, still divides the island of Cyprus?

It seems that the utopia of a world without borders remains a utopia. For a long time, we believed that globalization would contribute to subtracting importance from traditional borders, making nation-states obsolete. All the signs pointed in this direction. Globalization was able to bring about the free circulation of goods and capital, and to a lesser extent, the free circulation of people. We don’t know if it is a peculiar juncture without a future or a tendency that will go consolidating in the years. Frontiers have acquired new importance in the collective imagination and in the political calendars. A fact that puts them under the lens of the academic investigators.

1 On the Etymology of the Term ‘Frontier’

To speak nowadays of frontiers means to speak of a multifaceted phenomenon that involves different aspects of different realities: juridical, political, economic, social, etc. This means to consider an empiric concept with all its implications. An empiric concept is an abstract idea that, through a defined process, achieves to be observed in reality. It is composed of three parts: an idea, a term that can express the idea linguistically, an empirical reality that corresponds to the idea.⁴ The emergence of a specific term responds to the necessity of finding a name for an idea that can be observed in the empiric reality. If we embrace the idea of Giovanni Sartori,⁵ who tells us on many occasions that in the processes of concepts, the definition is not correct, the use of homonyms (a single term with different meanings) and synonymous (different terms with the same meaning), is then appropriate analysis of

³Vallet et al. (2014).

⁴Ogden and Richards (1923), pp. 10–13.

⁵Sartori (2011/1970), pp. 29–32.

frontier and of kindred concepts. This is because there exists a varied terminology expressing similar concepts. As we can observe in Table 1, frontier, border, bound, limit, edge, margin, for example, are all terms that express some division among something. And are recurrent terms in the academic literature related to the frontier phenomenon. Sartori⁶ reminds us that, in the process of concept-definition, it is necessary to consider similar concepts.⁷ The following is the lexicon created by Gadal and Jeansoulin⁸:

- Border
 - *Etymology*: from Old French: *bort* (ship's side); Germanic origin
 - *First meaning*: an outer edge of something, like a margin, but belongs to this something
 - *Derived words*: bordering (to approach)
 - *Concept*: to terminate
- Bound
 - *Etymology*: from Old French: *borne*; MedLatin-gaulois origin: *bodina*
 - *First meaning*: the external or limiting line of an object
 - *Derived words*: boundary (something that marks a bound)
 - *Concept*: to mark
- Edge
 - *Etymology*: from Greek: *akme* (point)
 - *First meaning*: the cutting side of a blade
 - *Derived words*: -
 - *Concept*: to collapse at a point (no dimension)
- End
 - *Etymology*: from Latin: *ante* (before); Sanskrit and Hittite origin: *hanz* (front)
 - *First meaning*: a part of the territory that marks a termination
 - *Derived words*: to end
 - *Concept*: *to face (emptiness?)*, *to end*
- Frontier
 - *Etymology*: from Latin: *frons* (forehead)
 - *First meaning*: a part (of a country . . .) that fronts or faces another (country . . .)
 - *Derived words*: -
 - *Concept*: to face (relatively to something else)

⁶Ibid. pp. 29–32.

⁷It is what the author defines as *terminology anchorage*.

⁸Gadal and Jeansoulin (1998), p. 177.

- Limit
 - *Etymology*: from Latin: *limes* (a way that physically marks) the border)
 - *First meaning*: boundary
 - *Derived words*: delimitation
 - *Concept*: to mark & to split
- Margin
 - *Etymology*: from Latin: *margo* (mark, sign)
 - *First meaning*: a part (territory. . .) that splits two (bigger) another one
 - *Derived words*: march (of a kingdom. . .)
 - *Concept*: a buffer or interval

These terms, each associated with a specific concept, have been used in the literature related to the frontier phenomenon. However, their meaning is not the same, and, consequently, the observable reality through the definition of the terms, which is normally known as an empirical reference, is variable.

With the analysis of Fulmer Mood,⁹ we propose embarking ourselves on an epistemological history of the term frontier. The roots of the word can be found in the Classical Latin *frons*, *frontis*, whose meaning corresponds to 'forehead'. As an extension of its original meaning, the term began to be used to define the front part of something. In Late Latin, the terms *fronteria* and *frontaria* appeared with the current meaning. In Old French, the term has been transformed into *frontiere*, preserving its meaning of frontier or border of a country. From France, the expression gets to England. William Caxton and William Shakespeare used the term with the sense of "a part of a country bordering to another".¹⁰ In the same way, in different meanings, the term has been consolidated in other Romance languages such as Italian, Castilian, Portuguese and Provençal.

In the first English-language dictionary, *A Table Alphabetical*, published in London in 1604 by Robert Cawdry, the term does not appear. We have to wait for 1623, with the publication, also in London, of the *English Dictionary: or, An Interpreter of Hard Words*, by Henry Cockeram. Frontier appears in its ancient connotation and is defined as "the bound or the limit of a country".¹¹ In 1721, Nathan Bailey published in London *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary*. The term is written as of today, frontiers, in the plural, and is defined as "the limits or borders of a Country or Province".¹² The same author published in 1730 the *Dictionarium Britannicum: Or, A More Compleat Universal Etymological English Dictionary than Any extant*. In this dictionary, the term frontier is defined as: "The border, confer or boundary of a kingdom or province, which the enemies find in the

⁹Mood (1949), p. 78–83.

¹⁰Ibid. p. 78.

¹¹Cockeram (1643).

¹²Bailey (1721).

front when they are about to enter the same”.¹³ With regard to the above mentioned, in the definition of 1730, there appears an element that we could define as relational. It is no longer a definition that includes a single point of view. There appears an eventual external enemy. The term frontier takes on a connotation that nowadays we could define as security. But the important thing to note is that the concept of the frontier has no life of its own, if not in relation to ‘one another.

Samuel Johnson, compiler of *A Dictionary of English Language*, published in London in 1755, defines frontier as: “The marches; the limit; The utmost verge of any territory; The border; Properly that which ends not at sea, but fronts another country”.¹⁴ Concerning Johnson’s definition, it is worth highlighting two aspects. The first is that the term is used principally as a synonym of the border. The second is that it presents a specific connotation: the terrestrial one. It is what today we call ‘land border’. A definition with the same meaning is that of John Walker in his *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Espositor of the English Language*, published in London in 1791: “The marches, the limit, the utmost verge of any territory”.¹⁵ In the definition of Walker disappears the exclusively terrestrial connotation and remains the use as synonymous of the term border.

To observe a true change of meaning of the term frontier, we must address the reality of the nascent United States of America. As we will see later in the chapter of Rodolfo Cano, *Frontier: Classical Conceptual Approaches*, the historical events that determined the formation of the new country played a central role in the characterization of the concept. However, on the western side of the Atlantic Ocean, the change of meaning was not immediate.

In 1798, Samuel Johnson Jr. published in New Haven the first English-language dictionary of the American continent, *A School Dictionary, Being A Compendium of the latest and most improved Dictionaries*. The term frontier does not appear. Two years later, in 1800, the same author compiled with John Elliott another dictionary, *A selected, Pronouncing and accented Dictionary: Comprising a Selection of the Choicest Word Found in the Best English Authors*. The term frontier appears with the meaning of “limits, bounds”.¹⁶ Despite this, there were previous reflections worth quoting.

The American Revolution, culminating in the Declaration of Independence of 1776, aroused academic interest, so to speak, for everything that could be considered American. The language was not excluded. In 1781, John Witherspoon, then Rector of Princeton University, wrote the following about the term frontier:

As you appear to be sensible of the importance of strict attention to grammatical propriety in speaking and writing, I am confident you will have no objections against being informed of any inaccuracies which may have escaped from your own pen: I shall, therefore, take the Liberty of pointing out a few... ‘This (Bringing the ‘Indian tribes upon the back

¹³ Bailey (1730), p. 79.

¹⁴ Johnson (1755).

¹⁵ Walker (1791).

¹⁶ Johnson (1800).

settlements') I call an act of extreme and unjustifiable barbarity because their manner of making war is well known.' Is not an *improper reason* assigned here? It is *their manner of making war*, and not *its being well known*, in which the barbarity of bringing them upon the settlements consist. The settlements in America were begun to be made near the ocean and were gradually advanced into the country; for this reason, I would prefer *frontier* to *back settlements*: nevertheless, the settlements may be either to one or the other according to circumstances: the following example will explain my meaning. A gentleman in London asked a printseller's clerk if Mr. Sayer was at home? the clerk replied, 'Yes, Sir, he is backward' – '*backward*, Sir, (said the gentleman) which way is that?' 'Straight forward, Sir, replied the clerk.' This was literally true, for Mr. Sayer was then in the *back* part of the house, towards which the gentleman's *face* was turned. In like manner, the settlements may be spoken of as being either *back* or *frontier*, according to circumstances; nevertheless, I prefer the latter appellation, in the case before us, for the reason which I have assigned above.¹⁷

We must wait until 1806 to find a variation in the meaning of frontier. Noah Webster, in his *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language*, a series of writings gathered under this title, includes the term frontier with a new connotation: "A limit, boundary, border on another country, furthest settlements".¹⁸ It is the first reference in a dictionary to the Western dimension of frontier. The historical element influences the meaning of a term.

In 1828, Webster published in New York *An American Dictionary of the English Language*. The connotation of furthest settlements disappeared. That is to say, the direct reference to the frontier that was advancing. The prevalent meaning of frontier is 'border'. However, a characterization of the concept of a frontier that would enter the common use was made visible: "The marches; the border, confine, or extreme part of a country, bordering on another country; That is, the part furthest advanced, or the part that fronts an enemy, or which an invading enemy meets in the front, or which fronts another country".¹⁹ Webster's 1828 definition made visible for the first time the multifaceted nature of the frontier concept, showing not only its border nature, something that delimits and divides, but its character of an extreme part of a country. Webster presented a meaning that nowadays we could define as a border strip.

Another fundamental moment for the change of meaning of the term frontier was the publication, in 1860, of *A Dictionary of English Language*, by Joseph E. Worcester. Frontier is defined as: "The boundary of a State, or the territories adjacent to the boundary; confine; border; marches".²⁰ In the definition of Worcester, appeared for the first time the clear double meaning that still exists today: the traditional one, that indicates a delimitation exclusively, confines, border, marches, and the new one, which implies an extension of the meaning of the concept: the territories adjacent to the boundary. An expression that makes a reference to an area.

Giovanni Sartori, in a paper that has become a classic of Political Sciences, *Concepts Misformation in Comparative Politics*, raises an important concern: the

¹⁷ Witherspoon (1781), p. 79.

¹⁸ Webster (1806).

¹⁹ Webster (1828), p. 80.

²⁰ Worcester (1860).

empirical reality changes and, with it, we must change the concepts. Otherwise, the theoretical and abstract dimensions would inevitably lose contact with the empirical one. Sartori's concern arises in the field of social transformation.²¹ We are in the early 1970s, and politics is becoming increasingly present in all areas of our lives. Sartori defines the phenomenon as an "expansion of politics".²² Politics gets bigger to use another expression of the same author. The world is politicized like never before. Every day, there are more states, more political participation on the part of citizens, more mobilization, more presence of the state in spheres of life that had never been the subject of intervention. Sartori stresses that this phenomenon changes the horizons, not only geographical, of the comparison. Its study object expands, including realities from all over the world. This implies comparing political systems that present different levels of structuring and consolidation. As the horizons expand, it requires concepts that can 'read' the different realities.

Returning to our concept, it should be clarified that, at the time in question, the term frontier did not appear in all the English-language dictionaries that were being published. Examples are the works of John Russel Bartlet, *Dictionary of Americanism: A Glossary of Words and Phrases Usually Regarded as Peculiar to the United States* (New York, 1848); *The Glossary of Supposed Americanism* by Alfred Langdon Elwyn (Philadelphia, 1859); *Americanisms: The English of the New World* by Maximilian Schede (New York, 1872); *Americanism: Old & New Words*, by the British John S. Farmer (London, 1899).

In *The Century Dictionary, An Encyclopedic Lexicon of English Language*, six volumes published in New York between 1889 and 1891, a definition that presents the double connotation of separation and area reappeared: "The part of a country which fronts or faces another country; The confines or extreme part of a country bordering another country; the marches; the border".²³ At the same time, a similar definition is contained in *Conquest of England*, published by J. R. Green: "The part of a country which forms the border of its settled or inhabited region: as (before the settlement of the Pacific coast), the western frontier of the United States".²⁴ The literature, too, contributed to defining the use of the term frontier. In the work *New Timothy* by W. M. Baker, the expression *frontier town* appeared. Once again, though indirectly, is attributed the meaning of area.

In 1890, was published the *Webster's International Dictionary of the English Language*, which included the following definition: "The part of a country which fronts or faces another country or an unsettled region; the marches; the border, confine, or extreme part of a country, bordering on another country; the border of the settled or civilized part of a country; as, the *frontier* of civilization".²⁵ Two connotations are made visible. The first relates to the concept of the border strip. The

²¹ Sartori (2011/1970), pp. 29–32.

²² Sartori (2011/1970) p. 29.

²³ Mood (1949), p. 80.

²⁴ Green (1884).

²⁵ Webster (1890), p. 81.

second is a peculiarity of the United States and refers to the proximity of supposedly uncivilized territories. The engine of the conquest. We dare to say that is the founding myth of the American country. In 1909, a new version of the dictionary was published in Springfield, Massachusetts, the *Webster New International Dictionary of English Language*. The definition maintained the meaning present in the previous edition: "1. The part of a country which fronts or faces another country; the marches; the border; (...) 2. The border or advance region of settlement and civilization; as, the Alaskan frontier (...)"²⁶ The same definition would be found in the second edition of the dictionary, published in 1934.

Funk and Wagnalls Company published in 1893 *A Standard Dictionary of the English Language*. There was a double definition of frontier. The first: "The part of a nation's territory that abuts upon another country; the border; confines".²⁷ The second: "That portion of a country between a civilized and an unsettled region; the confines of civilization".²⁸ In the same dictionary, terms such as *frontierman* and *frontiersman* appeared. A reference to the inhabitants of a specific geographical area near the border.

The double connotation of the concept consolidated in the dictionaries published in the following years. In *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, published in 1897 in Oxford by Sir James A. H. Murray, the term appeared thus defined as: "The part of a country which fronts or faces another country; the marches; the border or extremity conterminous with that of another"²⁹; and as: "That part of a country which forms the border of its settled or inhabited region: as (before the settlements of the Pacific coast), the western frontier of the United States".³⁰ We can find a clear differentiation between a concept of the American frontier and a British one in *The American Language, Supplement I*, by H. L. Mencken, published in New York in 1945. Referring to the term frontier, the author stated that, for an Englishman: "A frontier is always a boundary between two countries".³¹ In Mencken's work, explicit references to the process of border expansion appeared as a source of influence in the American language.

The idea that the U.S. frontier vicissitudes would influence the sense attributed to the term resides in the work of H. I. Horwill, *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*, of 1935. The author spoke about a particular use of the term in the U.S., defining it as: "The limit of settlement within the U.S., as defined by a certain density of population".³² In 1940, in Chicago, Sir William A. Craigie published the second volume of his *Dictionary of American English on Historical Principle*. Frontier is defined as: "A region in what is now the United States newly or sparsely settled and

²⁶ Webster (1909).

²⁷ Funk and Wagnalls Company (1893).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Murray (1897).

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Mencken (1947/1945), p. 82.

³² Horwill (1947/1935).

immediately adjoining the wilderness or unoccupied territory”.³³ Craigie referred to the specific use of the term in different authors. Among them, Frederick Jackson Turner, perhaps the main American theorist of the frontier in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This author will be analyzed in the next chapter.

Today, the meaning normally attributed to the term frontier has not changed. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, there are different connotations of the concept. As a noun, the term frontier is defined as: “A line or border separating two countries; The extreme limit of settled land beyond which lies wilderness, especially in reference to the western US before Pacific settlement”.³⁴ The metaphorical meaning of: “Extreme limit of understanding or achievement in a particular area”³⁵ is also displayed. The definition of the *Collins Dictionary* is similar: “A border between two countries; When you are talking about the western part of America before the twentieth century, you use frontier to refer to the area beyond the part settled by European; The frontiers of something, especially knowledge, are the limits to which it extends”.³⁶

The *Oxford Advanced American Dictionary*, a monolingual version dedicated to U.S. English, defines frontier as: “A line that separates two countries, etc.; the land near this line; the edge of the land where people live and have built towns, beyond which the country is wild and unknown, especially in the western US in the 19th century; the limit of something, especially the limit of what is known about a particular subject or activity”.³⁷

Considering dictionaries published in the U.S., the *Merriam-Webster*, circulating since 1828 and currently the most consulted online, proposes the following definition:

A border between two countries (the frontier between Canada and the U.S.); a region that forms the margin of settled or developed territory (were sent on an expedition to explore the western frontier); the farthestmost limits of knowledge or achievement in a particular subject (frontiers in immunology); a line of division between different or opposed things (the frontiers separating science and the humanities); a new field for exploitative or developmental activity (... the brain lies before us as one of the last scientific frontiers here on earth”).³⁸

³³ Craigie and Hulbert (1940).

³⁴ Allen et al. (1990).

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ HarperCollins (2019).

³⁷ Hornby and Crowther (2019).

³⁸ Merriam-Webster (2019).

2 On the Etymology of Related Concepts

According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*,³⁹ the term *border* appears for the first time in the heraldry field, in the middle of the fourteenth century, Middle Ages, with the meaning of “broad, colored band surrounding the shield”; from *bordure*. Its origin is found in Old French *bordeure*: “Seam, edge of a shield, border”.⁴⁰ A term which, in turn, derives from Frankish and Germanic *bord*. Since the end of the fourteenth century, ‘border’ has been used with the meaning of “edge, side, brink, margin”⁴¹ and also of “ornamental border along the edge of a dish, garment, etc.”.⁴² Since the late fourteenth century, the border appeared with the meaning of “boundary of a city or country”⁴³ and, since the XV century, associated with the concept of the region: “District lying along the boundary of a country”,⁴⁴ replaced in use the previous expression ‘march’. If we refer to the American reality, ‘border’ is understood as “the line between the wild and settled regions of the country”.⁴⁵

At present, the term border maintains the meanings that emerged in the Middle Ages. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as:

A line is separating two countries, administrative divisions, or other areas; A district near the border between two areas; The edge or boundary of something, or the part near it; A decorative strip around the edge of something; A strip of ground along the edge of a lawn or path for planning flowers or shrubs.⁴⁶

The *Collins Dictionary* defines the term border in this way: “The border between two countries or regions is the dividing line between them. Sometimes the border also refers to the land close to this line”.⁴⁷ The main meaning of the dividing line is maintained. And it is used as a synonym of the border region, indicating in this way more an area than a simple division. Something that does not differ much from the frontier definitions discussed above. In fact, the *Collins Dictionary* proposes it as a synonym for frontier. However, note that, despite indicating the two terms border and frontier as synonymous, the use of the term border in the sense of area is not so common.

To consider border and frontier as synonymous implies a semantic overflow of both terms. This breaks a very simple rule related to the basic rules that are normally respected in the formation of concepts: it is not appropriate to use terms with multiple meanings or different terms that mean the same. That is, the central meaning

³⁹Harper (2019).

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Allen et al. (1990).

⁴⁷HarperCollins (2019).

of frontier is an area and is also used to define a dividing line, while the central meaning of the border is a dividing line and is also used with the significance of the area.

According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*,⁴⁸ the term *bound* derives from Anglo-Latin *bunda*, a XIV century expression indicating “boundary marker,”⁴⁹ and from the Old French *bonde*, an expression of the XII century which means “limit, boundary, boundary stone”.⁵⁰ It is a variation of the term *bodne*, from Medieval Latin *bodina*, from Gaulish. Since the middle of the XIV century, the expression has been used as: “An external limit, that which limits or circumscribes”⁵¹ and, since the end of the same century, as: “Limits of an estate or territory”.⁵² From the term *bound* derives *boundary*, an expression in use since the early seventeenth century, with the meaning that has been maintained until today. The *Collins Dictionary* tells us that: “The boundary of an area of land is an imaginary line that separates it from other areas”.⁵³ The term, as in the case of the border, is proposed as a synonym for frontier.

Another term that has historically been used with the meaning of a dividing line is *limit*. His general sense referred to territory is from the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁵⁴ It derives from the Old French *limit*, which, in turn, derives from the Latin *limitem*, “a boundary, limit, border, embankment between fields”.⁵⁵ At present, the *Oxford English Dictionary* presents two main definitions. The first one: “A point or level beyond which something does not or may not extend or pass”.⁵⁶ And a second one is directly related to the territory: “The terminal point or boundary of an area or movement”.⁵⁷ The dictionary specifies that the term is used especially in the plural when it relates to the territory. From what we have outlined, it is perhaps the broader and more general concept. Even though in its Latin origin, the expression referred directly to a territorial boundary, nowadays, its use in this sense is not so common and precise.

There are other terms that are part of what we define as the semantic universe of the frontier concept: *march*, *margin*, *edge*, and *end*. According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*,⁵⁸ a *march* is a term in use since the beginning of the XIII century with the meaning of “frontier, the boundary of a country; border district”.⁵⁹ It derives from the Old French *marche*, used with the same meaning, which in turn

⁴⁸ Harper (2019).

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ HarperCollins (2019).

⁵⁴ Harper (2019).

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Allen et al. (1990).

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Harper (2019).

⁵⁹ Ibid.

finds its roots in the Proto-Germanic *markō*. The Proto-Germanic term evolved and was in use in Frankish, *marka*, Old Saxon, *marka*, Old English, *mearc*, Old High German, *Marchon* (to mark out, delimit), German, *Mark* (boundary). It is a term that nowadays is considered obsolete, no longer in use if referred to the territory. In the Anglo-Saxon world, the term was used to define the frontier of England with Wales and, successively, with Scotland. In the English of the XIV century, the verb *marchen* was in use, with the meaning of "to have a common boundary",⁶⁰ an expression that today survives in the dialect. March was the term that, in the ancient-Germanic culture, was used with the meaning of border or boundary. However, in its semantic evolution, the term has lost its original meaning to indicate predominantly a border strip from border or boundary to borderland.

The term *margin* presents the same etymological root of *march*.⁶¹ In its original meaning, since the middle of the fourteenth century, it was used with the meaning of "edge of a sea or lake".⁶² Only in a second moment, at the end of the XIV century, did the term acquire the current and perhaps most common meaning of "space between a block of text and the edge of a leaf or sheet".⁶³ It derives from the Old French *margin*, which in turn derives from the Latin *marginem* (edge, brink, border, margin). The meaning of "bordering space, boundary space, rim or edge"⁶⁴ is from the late fourteenth century.

To finalize this space of etymological exploration of the term that, somehow, enter the semantic field of the concept of frontier, we will consider the terms *edge* and *end*. Edge roots in the ancient Greek *akme* (point), in the Old English *ecg* (corner, edge, point); in Proto-Germanic *agjo* (edge); Old Frisian *egg* (edge); Old Saxon *eggia* (point, edge). The term presents the same meaning in almost all of the Nordic European languages.⁶⁵ At present, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the term edge as: "The outside limit of an object, area, or surface".⁶⁶ As well as the *Merriam-Webster*. The Collins as: "... The place or line where it stops, or the part of it that is furthest from the middle".⁶⁷ The same dictionary presents it as a synonym of border or limit, but not of the frontier. Edge is a very generic term when used with respect to the territory. Something comparable to limit, but much less common.

The end is a term derived from the Old English *ende* (end, conclusion, boundary, district, species, class). Like *edge*, it is present in different ancient Nordic languages, such as Old Frisian *enda*, Old Dutch *ende*, Dutch *einde*, Old Norse *endir*, with the meaning of end; in Old High German *enti* (top, forehead, end). The common root is found in Proto-Germanic *andiaz* (end, boundary), from root *ant* (front, forehead). In

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Harper (2019).

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Harper (2019).

⁶⁶Allen et al. (1990).

⁶⁷HarperCollins (2019).