

illogical to claim that as these were partly human constructs, as demographic and other social constraints changed, so should frontier and boundary lines.

Politically, the timing was opportune. At the beginning of the twentieth century, imperialism was at its height and there was a pressing need amongst the European colonial powers to devise defensible systems for defining politically the huge tracts of territory, particularly in Africa and Asia, to which they had laid claim. The best known and most influential of the exponents of the science of boundaries in the UK was Lord Curzon, a politician and polymath who was appointed Viceroy of India in 1899 and Foreign Secretary in 1919, as well as serving as President of the Royal Geographical Society. In 1907 he delivered the Romanes Lectures in Oxford on the subject of frontiers, in which he made a strong plea for frontiers and boundaries to be scientifically determined, even allowing for the fact that it was unlikely that any single set of principles for doing so would ever be agreed (Curzon, 1907). His enthusiasm for such general principles was highly empirical. There was evidence all around him that existing frontiers and boundaries had failed to bring political stability and he believed that a better organised political map would allow for much greater success. Interestingly, the horrors of the First World War subsequently made him much more cautious and, once he was involved as the British Foreign Secretary in devising a post-war settlement, he clearly understood that political horse-trading would be as important as any set of scientific principles.

Elsewhere in Europe the fascination with boundaries was equally great. In Germany, Albrecht Penk, best known now for his contributions to physical geography, gave his inaugural address as Rektor of the Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität in Berlin on the subject of political boundaries (Penk, 1917). In it he extolled the sacrifices being made by Germany's youth to defend the borders of the German Empire, but stressed that he viewed Germany's colonial boundaries more as areas of contact than friction, facilitating peaceful interchange between neighbouring peoples.

Others in Germany took a more robust approach and, after the First World War, developed a school of political geography, known as *Geopolitik*, which was explicitly influenced by the earlier writing of Friedrich Ratzel on the organic theory of the state. In fact, some of those who initially took up Ratzel's ideas, in particular the Swedish political scientist Rudolf Kjellen, the first person to coin the word *Geopolitik*,

probably exerted even greater sway. The leader of the German school was Karl Haushofer. Largely through the academic journal, *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, of which he was the editor, he and his collaborators generated a large literature, geared primarily towards rehabilitating Germany as a major European power in the wake of the defeat of the Kaiser's Second Empire in 1919 (Sander and Rossler, 1994). Haushofer's massive three-volume work, *Macht und Erde* (Power and Land), set out a detailed case for a radical redrawing of political boundaries across the globe to bring them more into line with what he saw as geopolitical reality (Haushofer, 1931–4). It evoked an immediate reaction in the English-speaking world, notably from the American geographer Derwent Whittlesey, who argued for a much more subtle interpretation of the relationship between society and the land. Rather than the natural environment being automatically the dominant influence in determining the most appropriate political boundaries, Whittlesey argued that they should emerge as the result of the long-term influence of human activity on the land (Whittlesey, 1939; Cohen, 2002).

Much of what was written in the name of *Geopolitik* was crude and self-serving, such as the tract *Spaniens Tor zum Mittelmeer* (Spain's gateway to the Mediterranean), which supported and justified Spain having exclusive control over the land either side of the Straits of Gibraltar (Pauser, 1938). It and other publications in similar vein were widely vilified at the time outside Germany, but nonetheless had the effect of discrediting worldwide the whole tradition of geopolitical analysis and writing for much of the second half of the twentieth century, including any suggestion that boundaries and frontiers could legitimately be seen as dynamic and changing elements in the landscape.

Geopolitics and the scientific study of boundaries was a tradition by no means confined to Germany and many of its exponents in other countries in Europe argued strongly against using boundary issues in any way as a justification for war, as opposed to the promotion of peace and harmony between nations. Geographers, such as Elisée Reclus in France and the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin writing in exile in the USA, provided substantial counter-arguments to those of *Geopolitik*, but their arguments did not attract the same level of public interest at the time (O'Loughlin and Heske, 1991).

The most effective counter to what he himself described as 'the geopolitics of domination' has come only relatively recently in the writings of Geoffrey Parker (1988). He suggests that this is only

one of two main traditions in geopolitics, the other being the geopolitics of cooperation. Although the latter has attracted much less serious academic study by political geographers, its achievements in practice throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries have been considerable. The peace initiatives throughout the period between the two world wars, as well as the doomed attempts to create an international political forum in the League of Nations, were not the end of the process of creating a world order based on peaceful coexistence. Quite the reverse, they marked the beginning of a major shift in geopolitical practice that, though interrupted between 1939 and 1945 by the Second World War, has continued to gather momentum through bodies such as the United Nations and the European Union.

Despite the now virtually universal rejection of the rather crude environmental determinism associated with the search for natural boundaries, boundaries and their delimitation continue to exert a powerful fascination for geographers, not to mention politicians. There are several major academic research institutes in the world devoted entirely to the study of frontiers and boundaries, including two in the UK (International Boundaries Research Unit at the University of Durham and the Centre for International Boundaries Research at the Queen's University Belfast), an indication of the continuing level of activity and its importance to political geography.

Critical geopolitics

The dogmatism and prescription associated with the study of geopolitics, and the way in which it had been used to promote particular national territorial agendas, particularly in Germany during the Third Reich (1933–45), not only brought this aspect of political geography into disrepute, it also meant that it was ignored by many political geographers. Geopolitics desperately needed to be reassessed and reinvigorated, but it was not until the concepts of postmodernism and post-colonialism began to interest geographers that there was sufficient impetus to move the subject forward (Dalby, 1990; Driver, 1992).

Many of the ideas for this reappraisal originated from outside geography, a notable source being the writings of the Palestinian cultural historian Edward Said, who argued forcefully in his book *Orientalism* that moral right in the world was rarely if ever vested in one side only. The views of what he termed 'the Other' were always relevant and that by looking

at political issues from more than one side, and especially from a multicultural perspective, was likely in the long run to lead to more enduring solutions (Said, 1995).

The lessons were embraced enthusiastically by political geographers, eager to break out of the philosophical straitjacket they had been struggling with for so long (Ó'Tuathail, 1996). The main contribution of critical geopolitics has been to broaden greatly the focus of debate within geography about relationships between states and other political entities. A seminal study examines the changing nature of relationships along the border between Finland and Russia, which have been subjected to a fundamental process of 'deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation' (Paasi, 1996). What is implied by this rather abstruse formulation is that political relationships rarely remain stable for long; there is always an ongoing process of questioning and reassessment that results in the old order changing and new ones replacing it. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990, this process was particularly active along the Finnish–Russian border, leading politicians and peoples on each side to reassess each other's motives and aspirations. In practical terms, what had been viewed as a virtually impermeable front line, became almost overnight a zone of fruitful and mutually beneficial contact. The intellectual energy generated by critical geopolitics is undeniable, but is more difficult to categorise and summarise within a neat framework. Very broadly, however, there are three basic organising concepts. First, there is politics associated with all types of geographical knowledge; second, there is a geography to all political practice; and third, the first two ideas can only be uncovered by challenging the taken-for-granted (Taylor, 2000, p. 126). In other words, there is no such thing as a value-free political decision and all political decisions have spatial consequences. One of the most important roles of political geography is to challenge the authority of decisions about territory and boundaries, so as to uncover their total impact on all those affected and, thus, help counter a one-sided and partial interpretation of events. It is a very different role from that envisaged by Mackinder and Ratzel.

Key themes and further reading

This chapter is about geopolitics and its ramifications for geography. An appreciation of the nature, historical extent, and human ambition behind some major past empires provides an essential background to the

concept. The enduring importance of the vision and world view of Sir Halford Mackinder must be understood, in particular the thinking underpinning the geographical pivot of history and the idea of the Heartland. Other, alternative world views, notably those of Mahan, Spykman, and Cohen, should also be included. The influence of environmental determinism and social Darwinism on the way in which many of these ideas evolved, as well as their impact on the dynamics of states, should be clear. The contribution of Friedrich Ratzel and the concepts of *Lebensraum* and the organic theory of the state are important in this context, as is the frontier thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner. The consequences of the heavy criticism heaped upon the whole study of geopolitics, as a result of its self-serving application in Germany through the *Geopolitik* movement, must be appreciated. At this stage the reader should be able to explain why frontiers and boundaries have been so important in the development of political geography, and why critical geopolitics has had such a transformative impact.

There is no better starting point for finding out more about the mindset behind early geostrategic thinking than Brian Blouet's (1987) biography of Sir Halford Mackinder. The tumultuous political upheavals of the twentieth century have meant that geostrategy and geopolitics have exerted a continuing fascination for geographers and Peter Taylor (1993) has edited an excellent collection of essays on the changes over the past century in *Political Geography of the Twentieth Century: a global analysis*. The recent emergence of a more critical approach to geopolitics, which has exposed the limitations of many of the earlier, more dogmatic, approaches, is well outlined by Gerard Ó Tuathail (1996) in *Critical Geopolitics*.

9

Dreams into action

The making of national foreign policy

How is the Empire?

(Last words of King George V, *The Times*, 21 January 1936)

The lure of empire

Although the word geopolitics was only coined in the early years of the twentieth century, applied geopolitics has been practised from time immemorial by those seeking to extend their political power and influence across the globe. The academic interest by geographers in the whole concept of geopolitics in the early nineteenth century led quickly to their being co-opted by policy-makers in government to help them develop and justify new strategies for reforming and stabilising the world order. It was a heady period of public recognition for the discipline, which was just beginning to establish itself as a serious area of academic study in its own right. Unfortunately, as was explained in Chapter 8, the love affair was short-lived. Geography and geographers were accused of providing specious scientific and academic justification for political strategies that were no different from those of a succession of rapacious political and military leaders through history, who had sought to extend their territorial power and influence at the expense of their weaker neighbours.

Ever since being used in this way, geopolitics as a legitimate area of academic study has been treated with understandable caution. At the same time, however, the word itself has become lodged in the wider consciousness and political strategists have incorporated it into their general vocabulary, to a point where geopolitics has come to be seen as a legitimate, and integral, part of their trade. The word is now used as a catch-all term to describe the whole process of trying to manage global

political events for narrow, and usually nationalist, strategic ends (Dodds, 2000; Taylor, 1993).

There is no single, simple, explanation of the urge to create global empires, but their importance for the wielding of political power is beyond doubt, as the last words of the dying King George V amply demonstrate. From the earliest times, the scale and ambition of the enterprises is quite breathtaking. Trade is undoubtedly one very important factor and some of the most extensive imperial projects have been built on the back of successful trading networks. The British Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries owed much to the initiative of trading companies, like the British East India Company (founded by Royal Charter in 1600), the London Virginia Company (1606), and the Hudson's Bay Company (1670). There were also similar companies founded in other European imperial countries, notably the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch West India Company in the Netherlands (founded in 1602 and 1621 respectively), the French East India Company (founded in 1664), and the Swedish East India Company (founded in 1731). All played vital roles in securing the political power bases overseas of their sponsoring governments.

The British East India Company

The most successful and influential of these companies was undoubtedly the British East India Company and the history of its development illustrates graphically how trade and politics were intimately combined in a geopolitical strategy, stretching over more than two and a half centuries (Lawson, 1993). The company was founded by a group of merchants in London in 1600 and was initially granted a Crown charter by Elizabeth I to trade in the East Indies for a period of fifteen years. The East Indies was an indeterminate area, at the limit of the known world as far as Europeans were concerned, but the company succeeded in establishing a number of highly profitable trading posts on the eastern seaboard of the Indian subcontinent. Its success persuaded James I to renew the charter indefinitely in 1609, though with commendable caution he included a clause to the effect that it would be automatically rescinded if the trade turned out to be unprofitable for three consecutive years.

The company expanded quickly and by 1647 had twenty-three factories scattered along both the east and west coasts of India, including Chennai (Madras), Mumbai (Bombay), and Kolkata (Calcutta), all of which were

destined to become major cities in modern-day India. The most important of these factories in time became walled forts, such as Fort William in Bengal, Fort St George in Madras, and Bombay Castle, and acted as major focuses for the subsequent urban expansion. The military defences were necessary to ward off other mercantile adventurers, in particular those from the Netherlands, Portugal, and France, all of whom were equally keen to obtain a slice of the lucrative trade in raw materials, such as cotton, silk, indigo, saltpetre, and tea.

In India itself, the Mogul Emperor in Bengal, and other regional rulers, were delighted with the burgeoning trade with England and the prosperity the British East India Company brought with it. They did everything they could to encourage its further expansion, including almost completely waiving all customs duties. This boundless trading success also delighted the government in Britain and in a series of acts King Charles II gave the company the right to annex territory in his name, to mint money, to command fortresses and troops, to forge alliances and make war and peace, and to exercise both civil and criminal jurisdiction over its territories. In short, the company had assumed virtually the full panoply of state powers (Wild, 2000).

Following its overwhelming success in India, the British East India Company was still eager to open up new markets elsewhere in the world and cast envious eyes at the Dutch spice trade in the Far East. By the early eighteenth century, it had secured a strong foothold in the Malacca Strait in what is now Singapore, and also established a trading post at Guangzhou (Canton) and founded what was to become Hong Kong. The company became by far the largest element in the emergent British global market, giving it unparalleled influence on, not only overseas trade, but all areas of government policy.

It was in India, however, that the company really evolved into a state within a state. Between 1754 and 1763, the company and its military forces conducted an extended campaign against the French in India, aimed at removing them as meaningful trading competitors. This culminated in a famous victory by Robert Clive, a company employee and Governor of Bengal, which saw the Fort of St George in Chennai (Madras) recaptured and the French presence in India reduced to a few small coastal enclaves with no military support.

Despite the grip that the British East India Company had over the Indian subcontinent, by the end of the eighteenth century it was clear that it was becoming hugely overstretched trying to cope with all its administrative,

judicial, and military responsibilities. The British government was forced to intervene and, in 1773, passed the Regulating Act for India, which introduced sweeping reforms, including specifying the respective roles and responsibilities of the government and the company. For the first time, a Governor General was appointed, independent of the company and directly responsible to the government in Britain. Essentially the company was allowed to retain its virtual monopoly on trade in return for paying all the administrative costs of the British presence in India, but the arrangement proved disastrous. There was still a lack of clarity about the division of responsibilities; the company continued to lose money; and the first Governor General, Warren Hastings, was indicted for corruption, recalled to Britain, and impeached by Parliament.

Subsequently, the arrangement struggled on, but the role of the company and its relationship with the British government became increasingly anomalous, even though its rule extended over most of India and Burma and also included Singapore and Hong Kong, incorporating more than 20 per cent of the world's people. The beginning of the end was when it was deprived of its trade monopoly in 1813 and, after the Sepoy Mutiny, a popular uprising by the Indian peasantry in 1857, the company's official activities in India were finally wound up in 1858.

In terms of geopolitics, the story of the British East India Company is very instructive. Its two hundred and fifty-year history in India spanned virtually the whole of what became known as the age of mercantilism, a time when governments in Europe used overseas trade as a means of extending their global political power and influence (Lipson, 1956). By the end of the eighteenth century, however, it was becoming clear that governments with territorial ambitions could no longer pursue them under the cloak of trading companies. Rather, they had to be more directly involved themselves and create the conditions under which trade could then flourish. It was a major shift of emphasis and marked the beginning of an era when governments began to work much more directly with each other in their far-flung colonial land dealings.

The birth of modern geopolitics

As outlined in Chapter 3, the modern political map, in the form that we know it today, and the idea that it could be manipulated and managed through diplomacy, first began to emerge, very tentatively, in the wake of the final collapse of the Napoleonic Empire in Europe in 1815. Two

developments on either side of the Atlantic Ocean were the touchstones for the putative new order: in Europe, the Congress of Vienna, first convened in 1814, began the long process of trying to rebuild the political infrastructure of the continent after a generation of war; while in America the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 by the USA served notice to the European colonial powers that their days of hegemony on the other side of the Atlantic were coming to an end.

The Congress of Vienna

In 1814, Napoleon was apparently finally defeated in France, the monarchy in the person of Louis XVIII was restored, and the Treaty of Paris ending hostilities was signed. Nevertheless, Europe was still in political chaos and, in an ambitious and flamboyant attempt to try to bring back a semblance of order, the Austrian Emperor, Francis I, convened the Congress of Vienna. The other major European economic and military powers, Russia, Prussia, and Britain were all represented, as well as all the multitude of states, large and small, that had existed prior to Napoleon's military and political intervention.

The deliberations at the congress were self-indulgent, slow, and cumbersome, with most of the real negotiations taking place behind the scenes between the representatives of the four major powers. The air of smugness was rudely shattered, however, by Napoleon's escape from Elba in 1815 and his remarkable reassertion of his political and military authority. For a hundred days he marched across Europe gathering support as he went, only to be defeated at Waterloo, after a very close-fought battle.

The effect on the Congress of Vienna was electrifying. It now had a real sense of urgency and a whole host of decisions were quickly taken, which completely redrew large parts of the political map of Europe and its overseas territories (Figure 9.1). Louis XVIII in *France* and Ferdinand VII in *Spain* were confirmed respectively as the monarchs in these two countries. The *German Confederation* of thirty-nine states replaced the several hundred mini-states, dukedoms, princedoms, and the like, that were the last vestiges of the Holy Roman Empire in mainland Europe. This left *Prussia*, which was part of the Confederation, without the prizes it had hoped for: Alsace and Lorraine in the west and Warsaw in the east. By way of appeasement it was given half of Saxony instead, in addition to important parts of Western Pomerania, Westphalia, and Rhine

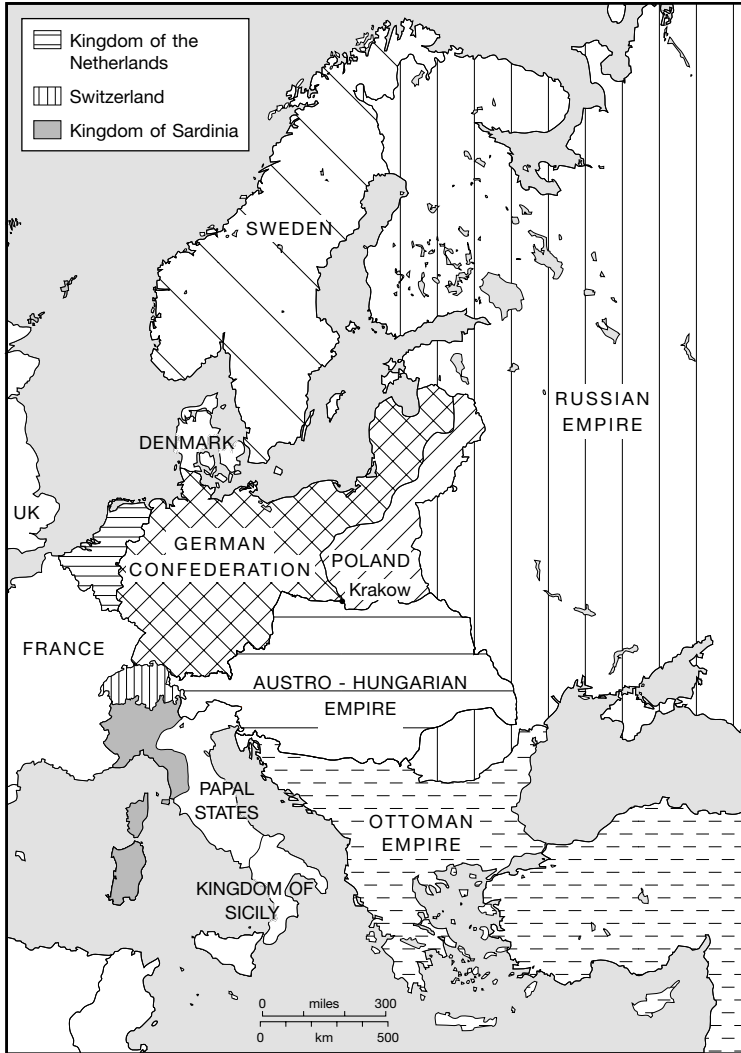


Figure 9.1 Territorial changes as a result of the Congress of Vienna, 1814–15

Province. In similar vein, *Austria* lost its stake in the Netherlands and was compensated with much of northern Italy, as well as the Venetian part of Dalmatia on the coast of the Adriatic. Combining the former Austrian territory in the Netherlands with the United Provinces in the north created the *Kingdom of the Netherlands* under the House of Orange. Russia had its occupation of Finland, Lithuania, and eastern Poland confirmed, and the Tsar was also crowned king of a nominally

separate *Kingdom of Poland* around Warsaw. *Sweden*, which had formerly ruled Finland, was given instead Norway, previously ruled by Denmark. While *Denmark* received the former Prussian Duchy of Lauenberg. In the Mediterranean, the *Kingdom of Sardinia* was resurrected and had Savoy, Nice, and Piedmont on the Italian mainland returned to it, as well as the territory of Liguria and the city state of Genoa. *Switzerland* had its boundaries enlarged and its future neutrality confirmed. The southern German provinces of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg were all awarded additional territory giving them more or less their present-day boundaries. *Britain* had little interest in acquiring territory on mainland Europe, preferring to take the opportunity to expand its colonial empire. It retained the former Dutch colonies of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Cape Colony (Cape Province in the Republic of South Africa), was given those parts of the West Indies that had previously been ruled by the Netherlands and Spain, retained the islands of Malta and Heligoland in the Mediterranean and North Seas respectively, and was given a protectorate over the Ionian islands in the Ionian Sea. All the regimes supported by the congress were monarchies of some sort, with one small exception. The city of *Krakow* in what is now south-western Poland was claimed by Prussia, Russia, and Austria without success and it was constituted as a republic. The final act of the congress was to conclude a new peace treaty with France (Treaty of Paris 1815), confirming its new boundaries and formally readmitting it as an independent state in its own right.

By any standards the wholesale territorial adjustments achieved by the Congress of Vienna were astounding and unprecedented, but opinion is sharply divided about the extent to which they reflected a genuinely thought-through new political order, or just an extended exercise in political expediency. Its sharpest critics claim that it did nothing but turn the clock back to the days of the *ancien régime* in pre-revolutionary, and pre-Napoleonic, Europe (Davies, 1996, p. 762). Others are more generous, arguing that it heralded a period of rapid political, social, and economic change in Europe, without the accompanying curse of war (Nicholson, 1946). Whatever the disagreements, however, the congress did inaugurate a system of regular consultation through international congresses for trying to find diplomatic resolutions for disputes between sovereign states. It is a process that was continued intermittently throughout the nineteenth century with limited success, gathered momentum and general acceptance in the twentieth century, and is now generally the norm for international negotiation.

Nevertheless, there were serious flaws and omissions in what was decided at the Congress of Vienna. Its unswerving support of monarchy, rather than republics, flew in the face of the direction of political change, not only in Europe, but also in the Americas and led to considerable pent up republican resentment, especially in France. The interests of ethnic and linguistic groups were almost totally ignored in redrawing the political map, sowing the seeds of much later unhappiness. In Central Europe, the rights of Poles, Czechs, and Slovaks were almost entirely swamped by the demands of the larger powers, whilst in the west, difficulty in bringing Francophone and Germanic peoples together sowed the seeds of continuing conflict. Finally, the most important shortcoming was the failure to engage with the consequences of the terminal decline of the Ottoman Empire in south-eastern Europe. A political vacuum was clearly in the making and, in not addressing the issue, the congress allowed the Balkans and Turkey to become the source of a succession of conflicts that have repeatedly destabilised Europe as whole (Glenny, 1999).

The Monroe Doctrine

In the USA, the Monroe Doctrine was also a response to the new political order after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The country was constitutionally a republic and working aggressively to reduce the European colonial influence, not only in North America, but in South America as well. The wars at home had diverted the attention of the Europeans, and European resources, away from their overseas interests generally and successive US administrations were determined not to see them re-established anywhere in the Americas. France had already ceded all its holdings to the USA and the last remnants of colonial rule south of the Canadian border in North America were swept away when Florida was purchased from Spain by the USA in 1822. In the same year, the USA formally recognised the fledgling republics in Argentina, Chile, Peru, Columbia, and Mexico.

As a pre-emptive action to dissuade any thoughts amongst the former European colonial powers from trying to reassert their political control, the US President James Monroe with the assistance of his Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, promulgated to Congress in 1823 what has become known as the Monroe Doctrine. Essentially, it declared that an attempt to interfere with the independence of any state in the Americas

would be treated by the USA as a danger to its peace and safety and would be resisted with all necessary force (Poetker, 1967). At the time, it was something of an empty threat, as the USA did not have a sufficiently large and strong navy to back up its warning, but the British were more than happy to lend it substance. Britain was the undisputed naval power in the world in the nineteenth century and was delighted to be able to assist in thwarting any renewed colonial aspirations on the part of France and Spain. For nearly a hundred years it supported the USA and helped make the Monroe Doctrine a military reality until the USA was able to do so on its own (Alvarez, 1924). The thrust of the Monroe Doctrine has proved very enduring. In principle, it is still a key tenet of American foreign policy and one that has long been sustained by the USA, without support from Britain or any other outside power (Scudder, 1939). Somewhat ironically, when the UK used military force against Argentina during the Falklands conflict in 1982, the legacy of the Monroe Doctrine made the USA very hesitant about lending any overt support, preferring rather to be seen as a mediator between the two warring sides.

The Monroe Doctrine is, however, also of much wider importance and strategic significance for the geopolitical balance of power. For the first time, an effective policy was implemented defining a clear-cut theatre of political influence in the world, beyond national boundaries, where a powerful state defended the territory and independence of its weaker neighbours. It has proved a most significant precursor to the present world order, where similar, though more elaborate agreements, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), have formed the cornerstone of regional stability in the north Atlantic and south-east Asia respectively, using the USA as a military guarantor.

Geography and the world order

Peace settlements in the wake of major conflicts have always been concluded in the hope of providing for political stability, though as the repeated outbreak of war has shown, success has only ever been very partial. Determination to succeed was never stronger than after the First and Second World Wars. The popularity of the Heartland and other theories developed by geographers in the early part of the twentieth century about the determinants of the balance of political power were eagerly adopted in influential political circles, giving the discipline a unique influence at a key moment in recent history.

Many of the major figures writing about political geography at the time, Mackinder, Bowman, and Curzon, became directly involved in policy-making and brief mention has already been made in the introduction (Chapter 1) of the role of geographers as advisers to the American, French, and UK governments in reconstructing the world map for the Treaty of Versailles (1919), which produced a settlement at the end of the First World War (Figure 9.2 and Box 9.1). Despite some deep scepticism on the part of the USA about the inevitable ascendancy of land power over sea power, Mackinder and his concepts of the Heartland and the geographical pivot of history were important influences on British thinking and made the UK government determined not only to prevent the German Empire from ever again holding Europe and the rest of the world to ransom, but also to see off any other future challenges to Anglo-French hegemony in the continent.

Isaiah Bowman, the Director of the American Geographical Society, was especially influential in determining the future shape of Europe and his ideas are very well known as a result of his best-selling book, *The New World*, which was first published in 1921 and ran to four editions in the interwar years, selling widely in both Europe and North America. Bowman's view of the world and its post-First World War future was very different from that of Mackinder. He believed in a world order built around a large number of nation states representing distinct ethnic and cultural groupings, their security guaranteed by the League of Nations and, as chief territorial adviser to President Wilson, was in an unrivalled position to press for his ideas to be adopted (Martin, 1980; Smith, 1984 and 2003). It is also interesting, and surely no accident, that one of the major criticisms of the treaties resulting from the Congress of Vienna a century earlier had been the failure to recognise sufficiently the aspirations of minorities of all kinds in Europe.

The decisions made in the Treaty of Versailles, and in a series of subsequent treaties, led to the complete dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as well as to Germany having its eastern and western borders radically trimmed, and to Russia losing control of virtually all the territory it had previously held in Eastern Europe. Out of this radical wing-clipping came a whole host of newly independent states: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on the eastern seaboard of the Baltic; a much more substantial Poland than in any previous incarnation; and Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia from the now defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire.