The Distinction Between State and Government

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Abstract

The terms "state" and "government" are often used interchangeably in political discourse, but they can also refer to very different entities. In political geography, a distinction between the two is often not made, or made weakly. Thus, this article reviews how these terms have been used in political geography and across allied disciplines, especially in international law. Political geographers commonly seem to draw from the anthropological and sociological uses of the terms, but the distinction between state and government is arguably most developed in international legal scholarship. This article argues that political geography would gain by adopting a distinction between state and government as it is articulated in international legal scholarship. Drawing from that literature, this article recommends that states be contrasted with governments in the following way: states are juridical entities of the international legal system; governments are the exclusive legally coercive organizations for making and enforcing certain group decisions. Arguably, ambiguity regarding the referents of these terms has hindered the development of state theory and even made it unclear what the "theory of the state" is supposed to explain. Therefore, this article concludes with a call for geographers to be just as cognizant of the distinction between state and government as they traditionally have been of the distinction between state and nation.

1. Introduction

The terms "state" and "government" can be so confounded during informal discussion and some academic discourse that there seems to be no practical distinction to be made between them. However, the two terms can also refer to very different entities, especially when one considers situations where governments can be removed through revolution, but the state (with its rights and obligations) remains. Using the terms "state" and "government" ambiguously or synonymously reduces the terminological specificity available to describe political phenomena. This article surveys the distinctions made between the terms "state" and "government" in political geography and across its allied disciplines, especially international law. Although political geographers have commonly drawn upon anthropological and sociological uses of the terms, the distinction between state and government is arguably most developed in the international legal literature. This article encourages terminological specificity by drawing upon that literature to propose the following distinction: States are nonphysical juridical entities of the international legal system, whereas governments are organizations with certain coercive powers. The relationship between a government and its state is one of representation and authorized agency.

Generally, it is argued that ambiguity regarding the referents of "state" and "government" has hindered the development of state theory and even made it unclear what a "theory of the state" is supposed to explain. Adopting a distinction between these terms would contribute to the development of state theory by clarifying exactly what entity is to be investigated. The development of state theory continues to be important because states wield vast powers

that are not shared by other entities in modern society, and as Flint (2009) recognizes, states are generally perceived as having a legitimate and unquestioned right to exercise those powers. Therefore, states and state theory remain a central subject matter in political geography and geopolitics.

Political geography's ambiguity between states and governments seems especially curious in light of the fact that political geographers have traditionally drawn a sharp distinction between states and nations. The literature contains many examples where geographers expound on how states should be distinguished from nations, including Johnston (1982), Short (1993), Agnew (1994, 1998), Braden and Shelly (2000), Glassner and Fahrer (2004), White (2004), Flint (2006), and Flint and Taylor (2007). Therefore, this article concludes with a call for political geographers to be just as strident about the distinction between states and governments as they have traditionally been regarding states and nations.

2. The Confusion Between State and Government

Between (and within) disciplines allied with political geography, the study of the state can mean many different things. For some, the development of the state is merely an "accounting for the development of government" (Spruyt, 1994, p. 195). In the anthropological and sociological literature, the state is "compared to tribal and kinship associations. Thus city-states, empires, and leagues are all considered to be forms of states" (p. 195). For instance, Flannery (1972), an anthropologist, writes that a state is "a type of very strong, usually highly centralized government, with a professional ruling class, largely divorced from the bonds of kinship which characterize simpler societies" (p. 403).

Mann (1984), a sociologist often cited in political geography's literature, expands upon this understanding by associating statelessness with primitivism. He writes, "The only stateless societies have been primitive. There are no complex, civilized societies without any center of binding rule-making authority, however limited its scope" (p. 195). He further explains, "societies with states have had a superior survival value to those without them. We have no examples of stateless societies long enduring past a primitive level of development, and many examples of state societies absorbing or eliminating stateless ones. Where stateless societies conquer ones with states, they either themselves develop a state or they induce social regress in the conquered state" (p. 195). Strayer (2005 [1970]), a historian of the medieval period, expressed a similar sentiment when he wrote, "Only the most remote and primitive peoples can do without the state. As soon as the modern world touches an area, the inhabitants must either form a state, or take refuge in the shadow of an already existing one" (p. 4).

When geographers define the state, they often borrow from the anthropological use of the term and incorporate some of Weber's (2004 [1919]) notion of the monopolization on the legitimate use of force. For instance, Marston (2004) clearly draws upon these when she writes that states are "coercion wielding organizations that are distinct from households and kinship groups and usually exercising clear priority over all other organizations within a territory" (p. 2). Dear (2000b) explains, "Hunting and gathering bands are typically too small and isolated to allow for, or require, the existence of an independent political institution. In contrast, agrarian societies were mostly state endowed" (p. 788). Thus, he contends that states have been present in human society since the transition from hunting and gathering to agrarian food production. Flint's (2009) definition, "a centralized set of institutions facilitating coercive power and governing capability over a defined territory" (p. 722), may be in a similar vein. Certainly in some cases, an anthropologically influenced understanding of the state is understandable, especially on the part of those, such as Megoran (2006), who advocate the adoption of anthropological field methods as a technique for studying political geography.

Other geographers also articulate a straightforward association between state and government. Agnew (1998) directly equates state and government when he writes that a state is a "government of a bounded territory which claims common political and legal authority and a monopoly of legitimate force and other sovereign powers throughout its jurisdiction" (p. 129). In her investigation of governments-in-exile, McConnell (2009) seems to suggest that the term "government-in-exile" may be synonymous with "state-in-exile." White (2004) believes that "Government is so fundamental to statehood that the word *government* is used synonymously with *state*. Thus, when we speak of state action, it can actually mean government action" (p. 67, emphasis in original).²

Equating states with governments in this fashion seems to prompt a focus on the internal relationship between a society and its governing coercive organization. Hence, Flint (2009) writes that the state must be defined "in relation to two other spheres of modern life, the market (or economic activity) and civil society" (p. 723), and it is by the role that a coercive governing organization plays in a society's socioeconomic structure that states become associated with the economic systems of their societies. For instance, Dear (2000b) writes that "A capitalist society should, in principle, give rise to a distinctly capitalist state" (p. 789) and that a theory of the state should be concerned with "the state as a set of institutions for the protection and maintenance of society" (p. 789). Of course, interest in the socioeconomic role of "the state" as a coercive organization is especially prevalent in Marxism and Marxist geography because the abolition of such an organization is central to Marxist thought. See Bloom (1946) for a detailed analysis of Marxist thought on the abolition of the state.

Further confusion arises with the introduction of the "local state," which is the "set of institutions charged with the maintenance and protection of social relations at the subnational level" (Dear, 2000a, p. 453). "Local state" may sound to some as if it is a synonym for "local government," and indeed, Duncan and Goodwin (1982) recognize this terminological confusion. They write that the term "local state" is very often "simply swapped for 'local government' and seems little more than a radical rhetoric used to denote a non-traditional viewpoint" (p. 77). Although it might be that the term "local state" is intended to stress "interaction with the national government, and with the wider social economic system" and incorporate the "analysis of important local institutions not normally counted as local government" (p. 78), it remains the case that "in most discussions 'local state' can in fact be easily replaced by 'local government' with little effect on the argument. Indeed, writers sometimes slip from one to the other with little clear rationale" (p. 78). The use of the term "local state" in "radical rhetoric" connects the term to Marxist thought in which "local states" are entities that can be subjected to Marxist political-economic analysis (Duncan and Goodwin, 1982).

J. P. Nettl (1968) specifically wrote on the terminological confusion between state and government. He perceived a blurring of the terms and implored scholars to ensure that the term "state" remained meaningful and not merely "a ragbag synonym of government" (1968, p. 563), and some geographers have in fact made an attempt to distinguish states from governments. For instance, Agnew (1994) recognized that definitions of the state often have two different aspects. In one sense, the state "involves the exercise of power through a set of central political institutions" (p. 53). This is closely associated with "discussions of state—society relations and the relative autonomy of the state in relation to other putative causes of social life" (p. 53). Other definitions focus on "the clear spatial demarcation of the territory within which the state exercises its power" (p. 53), which is a critical component of international relations theory.

Flint and Taylor (2007) distinguish between states and governments in the following way:

[G]overnment can be interpreted as the major agent of the state and exists to carry out the day-to-day business of the state. Governments are short-term mechanisms for administering the long-term purposes of the state. Hence every state is served by a continuous succession of governments. But governments only represent the state; they cannot replace it. A government is not a sovereign body: opposition to the government is a vital activity at the very heart of liberal democracy; opposition to the state is treason. (p. 137)

They go on to write, "Governments may try to define themselves as the state and hence condemn their opponents as 'traitors', but this is a very dangerous game" (p. 137), since it may lead to the state being challenged, and perhaps overthrown by an "insurgent state" (McColl, 1969). While the precise definition of treason will vary according to the legal systems of different states, the above does emphasize the importance of the distinction between state and government. Opposition to one can be vital to liberal democracy; opposition to the other can potentially result in one's execution. However, although they believe that the distinction between state and government is important, Flint and Taylor (2007) note that other scholars believe the distinction is "not of practical interest, because all state action must involve some specific government operation acting in its name" (p. 137, internal citation omitted). Interestingly, Flint and Taylor do not counter this by arguing the practical importance of the distinction. Instead, they emphasize that the "important point" is that the distinction is theoretical. They write, "One of the major problems of much of political science and political geography is that they have considered government action without understanding the wider context in which it occurs. That framework can be provided only by developing a theory of the state separate from the particular actions of particular governments" (p. 137).

This article agrees that the distinction between state and government is essential to make, but disagrees with the position that the distinction is not of practical interest. International legal scholars have developed a practical distinction between states and governments from which political geography might advantageously borrow. Crawford (2006) encapsulates international law's perspective on the distinction in the following way:

[I]nternational law does distinguish between change of State personality and change of the government of the State. There is a strong presumption that the State continues to exist, with its rights and obligations, despite revolutionary changes in government, or despite a period in which there is no, or no effective, government. Belligerent occupation does not affect the continuity of the State, even where there exists no government claiming to represent the occupied State. The legal position of governments-in-exile is dependent on the distinction between government and State. (p. 34)

Marek (1968) addresses the legal principles of international law and their historical application, which maintains that "the identity and continuity of the State are not affected by changes of government" (p. 24), even in cases where a government is overthrown by violent revolution. The distinction between state and government is also present in the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, signed in 1933. Article One reads, "The state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications: (a) a permanent population; (b) a defined territory; (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with the other states." It is plain that the Convention does not use the terms "state" and "government" interchangeably. Having a government is only one qualification for statehood. The government is a part or component of the state in some way, not the state itself.

The confusion between state and government might stem from the relationship that some governments have with states. Wight (2004) explains that "It is not surprising that government and state should often appear as synonymous" (p. 276) and quotes Miliband (1969), who writes, "it is the government which speaks on the state's behalf. . . . It is these [governmental] institutions in which state power lies and it is through them that this power is wielded in its different manifestations by the people who occupy the leading positions in each of these institutions" (p. 49). Crawford (2006) confirms this and explains, "Although the law distinguishes States from their governments, normally only the government of a State can bind that State, for example by treaty" (p. 60). According to this terminological schema, governments are not states, but they can *represent* them.

2.1. WHAT IS THE STATE?

If states are distinguished from governments according to the schema outlined above, then states are nonphysical juridical entities, specifically, the objective legal persons of international law (Robinson, 2010). States are "objective" in the sense that their existence does not depend on the subjective opinions of other states. Rather, their existence is a matter of fact once certain criteria are met. This definition adheres to the declarative theory of statehood and is a rejection of the constitutive position.³ States are legal persons in Naffine's (2003) "P1" sense in which "legal personality is nothing more than the formal capacity to bear a legal right and so to participate in legal relations. It is not a moral term. It does not depend on metaphysical claims about what it is to be a person" (p. 350). Legal persons can only exist relative to a system of law, and in the case of states, the relevant system is international law. Because of the state's nonphysicality, James (1986) points out one of the state's key characteristics—"no one has ever seen a sovereign state" (p. 6).

These nonphysical states have not always been a feature of the international system, but were only developed a few centuries ago. Agnew (1994) specifically addressed this subject when he wrote that according to some schools of international relations, the state system is perceived as being "structural and ahistorial" (p. 57). For instance, according to the examples Kenneth Waltz uses to illustrate his theories, "antagonistic territorial states have been around at least since the time of Greek philosopher-historian Thucydides" (p. 57). Agnew is critical of such a position for giving no attention to the "the distinctiveness of the modern international system and its roots in the growth of capitalism and centralized military competition in the 16th to 18th centuries" (p. 57). Agnew claims that Waltz's analysis results in the state system having "an existence outside the historical contexts in which it has evolved" (p. 58).

Traditionally, the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 has been considered the birth of the modern state system, and "Westphalian sovereignty" has become the common terminology for noninterference in the internal affairs of other states. However, the emergence of the modern state system hardly occurred neatly with the concluding treaties of the Thirty Years War. The Peace of Westphalia itself was not the decisive landmark in European politics that is sometimes portrayed (Osiander, 2001; Teschke, 2002; Lesaffer, 2004). Instead, the state system was but one political organization to emerge out of feudalism that beat out its competitors (Spruyt, 1994). But regardless of when exactly the state system fully formed, "the belief that states are legitimate universal institutions with a 'right' to wield power over individuals is, generally, unchallenged" (Flint, 2009, p. 723, internal citation omitted). While there are certain groups that mount challenges to the legitimacy of a state's right to wield such power (for example, libertarians, anarchists, and tribal people), the development of the state from nonexistence into such a powerful and taken-for-granted entity in a rather short span of time warrants careful study.

If states are nonphysical juridical entities, then governments are the exclusive legally coercive organizations for making and enforcing certain group decisions. 4 Thus, in contrast with the more abstract state, governments are more concrete, since they can be observed. The state system is comparatively young, but government has existed as long as people have had the desire and the legal means for some individuals to make and enforce decisions for the group. Today, governments typically delineate what groups of people they are permitted to make decisions for based on geographic location, but this has not always been the case. Medieval polities based such decisions on kinship, universalist claims of authority (such as those of the Catholic Church or the Holy Roman Empire), or other nonterritorial means (Spruyt, 1994). The absence of government is anarchy, where "anarchy" is used exclusively in a descriptive sense—not as a synonym for disarray or chaos, nor one with either positive or negative moral connotations. The key difference between government and other organizations in today's society is that it has a "monopoly of vast force (the army, the police, etc.), and can use coercion to enforce its rules and to punish law breakers" (Mady, 2008, p. 354). This recalls Weber's (2004 [1919]) definition of the modern "state" as "the form of human community that (successfully) lays claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a particular territory" (p. 33), which is in contrast to earlier forms of political organization in which "the use of physical violence by widely different organizations—starting with the clan—was completely normal" (p. 33).

Today's government is geographic because (generally speaking) it has the legal right to coerce someone simply because of his or her location, and people do not have control over the location of their births. While association with most organizations is voluntary, most people today "become subject to governmental rules and decisions without any intentional choice" (Mady, 2008, p. 354), and ignorance of one's location is seldom a successful defense against law breaking. However, it is also possible that governments will not have coercive power over some people within their territory. These special circumstances might obtain through status of force agreements, such as those between the USA and Afghanistan and Iraq, or be established though convention, such as diplomatic immunity. The territorial extent and spatial limits of government are the main subject of study by legal geographers (e.g., Wigmore, 1929; Grossfeld, 1984; Blomley et al., 2001; Gould, 2003; Holder and Harrison, 2003; Taylor, 2006; Carr, 2010; Collins and Procter, 2011; Jepson, 2012), not only from the perspective of how law becomes imposed in certain places but also from the perspective of how law creates and shapes space and place (Martin et al., 2010). Legal spaces and places are studied on a variety of scales, including that of the state and international law. For instance, the US naval base at Guantanamo Bay attracted geographic attention since it was put forward as a place outside of law, the jurisdiction of the US judiciary, and as a "space of exception" (Gregory, 2006; Reid-Henry, 2007). International law is also a major factor in understanding the territorial limits of government, including not only terrestrial and maritime bounds but also the vertical limit of the transition from airspace to outer space, which has special importance regarding legal jurisdiction over geostationary orbit (Collis, 2009). Despite these limits, the relationship between law and territory has been changing to make the law more aspatial and encompassing (Raustiala, 2005). Further, legal geography has been involved in the study of war, one of the most serious activities governments engage in. The law has traditionally delineated war space from nonwar space, but recent warfare, especially the Global War on Terror, has attempted to make war far less constrained by traditional geographic bounds (for discussion see Gregory, 2010; Morrissey, 2011; Sciullo, 2012).

While the power of today's governments is often (though not always) limited in geographic range by political boundaries, the scope of their competence is often limited by a constitution or similar mechanism. Different societies (and even different groups within a single society) can

have widely different opinions about what decisions a government should be able to make and enforce, and which decisions should be left to individuals or other societal components. A characteristic of today's governments is that they have far-reaching competences. Painter (2006) engaged with this subject and describes the pervasiveness of government in everyday life in the UK. The vastly different ways in which questions of governmental competence can be answered has resulted in the development of a wide range of political philosophies regarding government's proper role in the family, the economy, industrial production, finance, women's reproductive rights, labor, currency manipulation, and much more besides.

Some governments have a special relationship with a state. The key factor in this relationship is that states are nonphysical and cannot exercise their rights and responsibilities or take action directly. Because "states are abstract collective entities unable to accomplish anything except through designated human agents" (Peterson, 1997, p. 1), "governments maintain the legal monopoly on speaking and acting for their state" (p. 20). Therefore, the primary relationship between states and their governments is one of representation and authorized agency. A government can be authorized to represent a state, but it is the state that has "complete legal personality under international law" (p. 20). Governments "have those rights and obligations necessary for carrying out their tasks as the human agents of states" (p. 20). The mechanism by which a government acquires this representational link with a state is left for elaboration in other work, but domestic and international law are closely linked when it comes to government succession. Peterson (1997) explains,

A government succeeding to power according to the constitution, basic law, or established domestic custom is assumed to succeed as well to its predecessor's status as international agent of the state. Only if there is legal discontinuity at the domestic level because a new government comes to power in some other way, as by coup d'état or revolution, is its status as an international agent of the state open to question. (p. 185)

Overthrow of a government and installation of a new one by a foreign power does not create an entity authorized to act on behalf of the defeated state. A government created in such a circumstance may be a puppet government, and its actions will be considered those of the state that forcibly installed it (Crawford, 2006), although an occupation government "regulated within the framework of Chapter VII of the Charter [of the United Nations] presents a distinct case; absent a competing government-in-exile, it may possess general status as an entity authorized to act on behalf of the State, even though it is not an indigenous government and has not been elected or otherwise chosen by the people of the State" (p. 689).

Finally, with regard to the subject of government, it should be noted that government is not necessarily the same as *governance*. "Governance" is "sometimes used loosely to mean simply government" (Painter, 2009, p. 312), but the term can also refer "to the process of social and economic coordination, management and 'steering'" (p. 312), which does not need to involve a coercive organization at all. For instance, it includes cultural traditions that give special weight to the opinions of family or tribal elders in certain matters. Even self-control and the limits of one's conscience are parts of a society's governance. These can be present even in anarchy.

3. The State/Government Distinction in State Theory

In this penultimate section, the distinction between state and government will be briefly placed in the context of state theory, specifically the more traditional debate regarding the distinction between the state and *society*. Abrams (1988 [1977]) and Mitchell (1991) are

particularly notable for their contributions on the difficulty of defining the state, studying the state, and situating the state with respect to society. Abrams (1988 [1977]) writes, "the state, conceived of as a substantial entity separate from society has proved a remarkably elusive object of analysis" (p. 61). However, it is important to note the reasons he provides for the difficulty of studying the state. Part of his argument rests on the difficulty of studying institutions of powerful people. He writes,

Anyone who has tried to negotiate a research contract with the Home Office or the Department of Health will be aware of the extreme jealousy with which such agencies instinctively protect information about themselves. The presumption, and its effective implementation, that the 'public sector' is in fact a private sector about which knowledge must not be made public is all too obviously the principal immediate obstacle to any serious study of the state. (p. 61)

Later he explains, "Any attempt to examine politically institutionalized power at close quarters is, in short, liable to bring to light the fact that an integral element of such power is the quite straightforward ability to withhold information, deny observation and dictate the terms of knowledge" (p. 62). According to the distinction presented in this article, Abrams seems to be concerned with the difficulty of studying organizations of people with certain coercive powers—in short, the difficulty of studying *government*. States, being nonphysical, are of a character very different from that of an organization of people. While the study of nonphysical entities may also be difficult, their study would be difficult for reasons different than those Abrams presented.

Similarly, Mitchell (1991) writes that "it remains difficult to explain exactly what is meant by the concept of state" (p. 77), at least in part because "a definition of the state always depends on distinguishing it from society" and "the line between the two is difficult to draw in practice" (p. 77). Importantly, he notes that when scholars abandoned the study of the state during the 1950s in favor of the study of "political systems" or "societies," they did not do so for substantive theoretical reasons. Instead, they did so, in part, simply because of terminological and definitional difficulty. Political scholars found that the meaning of the term "state" was vague and this produced "disagreement about what exactly it referred to" (p. 78). Arguably, this is moving backward. Terminology should be a linguistic tool for political scholars to accurately communicate information about the entities they are studying. Vague terminology should not be an artificial constraint on scholarly political inquiry.

To address the difficulties of the state/society distinction, Mitchell (1991) attempted to lay a foundation for the study of "political processes through which the uncertain yet powerful distinction between state and society is produced" (p. 78). In his article, he does not address the relationship between state and government, or how (or if) he distinguishes between them. Nevertheless, he uses examples of the interaction between governments and private entities as evidence that there is no real boundary between state and society. He concludes that the boundary between state and society "must be taken not as a boundary between two discreet entities, but as a line drawn internally within the network institutional mechanisms, through which a social and political order is maintained" (p. 78). While the (often tangled) web of relationships between private entities and governments is very important to recognize, study, and attempt to understand, arguably, the presence of such relationships does not support the conclusion that states are not distinct entities from societies. For such a conclusion to be drawn, the distinction between state and government would have to be articulated, and then, the relationship between the government and the state defined.

Finally, it should be noted that adherence to the distinction between state and government articulated in this article does not commit one to the *existence* of either of these entities.

Existence is a separate question. However, questions of definition must precede investigations and arguments concerning existence, because it is through definition that one knows what entity he or she should be investigating the existence of. However, questions of existence are beyond the scope of this article, and are left to further research.

4. Conclusion

This article has drawn a distinction between states, the nonphysical objective legal persons of international law, and governments, the exclusive legally coercive organizations for making and enforcing group decisions, that is based on the distinction present in international legal scholarship. This distinction is often not made (or at least made weakly) within political geography and political studies more broadly. As a result, linguistic expressiveness is reduced and the ability to differentiate between two very different entities is decreased. Moreover, this reduces the terminological specificity available to describe political phenomena. Arguably, using the term "state" to refer to a wide variety of different entities retards the development of state theory. Within single disciplines and especially across the allied disciplines of political studies, there is not even a basic guarantee that when one reads work on "states" or "state theory," they are all in fact examining the same entity. Following from that ambiguity, political geographers (and scholars of political phenomena more broadly) may not have decided what it is they intend a theory of the state to explain. If one expects the theory of the state to explain the workings of societies, broadly speaking, which have had reasonably centralized governmental authority anywhere in the world going back to antiquity, one must at least accept that the theory will be very general and may have very little explanatory power compared to, for example, a theory of the state as one of many particular political organizations that emerged from European feudalism.

Further, there is nothing that geography must "give up" to make the distinction between these entities articulated in this article. The distinction only makes clear that states and governments are *two* related entities and not one and the same. All of the investigations of certain coercive organizations and their impacts on politics, economics, and society can still be addressed. The term "government" can be used to refer to coercive organizations of a particular kind in these kinds of relationships. This leaves "state" to refer to the nonphysical geopolitical entities that emerged out of European feudalism. Therefore, political geographers should become just as stringent about the distinction between state and government as they are about the distinction between state and nation. This distinction is an important component in the development of a cohesive theory of state (and of government) with reasonable levels of explanatory power.

Short Biography

Edward Heath Robinson is a political geographer and geographic information scientist. His research is primarily in the areas of state theory and geopolitical ontology. He studies geopolitical phenomena from the perspectives of philosophical ontology and ontology for information systems. The goals of this approach are to develop better geopolitical theory and better geopolitical ontologies for semantic information systems. His research has included articles on the nature of geopolitical boundaries, the relationship between states and governments, and the extinction of states through military conquest. He has also developed a theory by which states (and other quasi-abstract social entities) can take action through representation. He received his PhD from the University of Buffalo where he was a National Science Foundation Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) fellow in Geographic Information Science.

Notes

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- ¹ She also mentions that this is a concurrence with Tilly's (1990) definition of the state.
- ² Henceforth, any emphasis and parentheses present in quotations will have been preserved from the original unless otherwise specified.
- ³ The debate between constitutive and declaratory theories of statehood will not be entered into here. See Crawford (2006) for a summary overview. For those of a more constitutive persuasion, this definition could be modified without damage to the main arguments of this article.
- ⁴ The term "government" in this sense is different from how the term is used in a parliamentary context, where "government" can simply refer to the individuals who are in office at the time. After elections, the Prime Minister might be called upon to "form a new government," but this is not discontinuity of government in the sense considered here. In the UK, even though a "new" government may be formed, that government still operates within the existing constitutional monarchy. Overthrow or abolition of the British monarchy and installation of a new system would be discontinuity of government according to the meaning adopted here.
- ⁵ See Robinson (2011) for a theoretical framework for how nonphysical social entities can take action through representation.

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