Predictions that globalization would undermine territorial attachments and weaken the sources of territorial conflict have not been realized in recent decades. Globalization may have produced changes in territoriality and the functions of borders, but it has not eliminated them. The contributors to this volume examine this relationship, arguing that much of the change can be attributed to sources other than economic globalization. Bringing the perspectives of law, political science, anthropology, and geography to bear on the complex causal relations among territoriality, conflict, and globalization, leading contributors examine how territorial attachments are constructed, why they have remained so powerful in the face of an increasingly globalized world, and what effect continuing strong attachments may have on conflict. They argue that territorial attachments and people's willingness to fight for territory appear to have much less to do with the material value of land than they have to do with the important symbolic role it plays in constituting people's identities, and producing a sense of security and belonging in an increasingly globalized world.

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Acknowledgments

This project began with a simple observation. Numerous scholarly studies have shown that territorial disputes are more likely to escalate, are more likely to produce a high number of fatalities, and are more conflictual than non-territorial confrontations (i.e., Luard 1986; Holsti 1991; and Hensel 1994). Yet globalization and technological innovation have also seemingly reduced the importance of territory, at least in terms of its economic and strategic value. Why has territory continued to be a key source of violent conflict even as goods, capital, and populations move increasingly seamlessly across borders?

To date, scholars have focused on the connection between territorial stakes and conflict, and between globalization and conflict, but not on the effects of globalization on territoriality and territorial conflict. Our goal was to fill in these missing links by exploring what effect, if any, globalization may have on territorial attachments, stakes, and institutions, and what effect these changes may then have on territorial conflict. In the course of the project, territoriality itself and changes in territoriality over time became a more prominent part of the enterprise.

The project began with a two-day workshop in La Jolla in March 2001. Our first aim was simply to identify and assemble those scholars in a variety of disciplines working on issues related to territoriality. Participants were drawn from political science, anthropology, geography, and law, and deployed a range of methodological and epistemological approaches. The workshop produced two surprises. The first was that many of the participants had never met before and most were unaware of each other’s research programs. The second surprise was that the group generally agreed that the next big contribution would come from exploring the origins of territorial attachments; only by understanding the sources of territorial attachments could we begin to comprehend how globalization (and the various processes associated with it) might influence people’s willingness to fight for land.

This initial workshop led to two additional conferences held in January 2003 and January 2004. During these conferences draft chapters were
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