

Exercise 3

Complexity of Cultural Areas
(cultural interaction)

Select two time periods from the list and discuss the cultural interaction that took place during each period.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

9 = A
3 = B
1 = C
3 = D with option to rewrite
0 = F
6 = Not submitted

NEXT: Associated Images: cultural landscape due Nov. 16.

GEOG 247 Cultural Geography

The Geopolitics of Culture 2

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The Geopolitics of Culture

❖ **Political geography is the spatial study of politics and political matters** including the organization and distribution of political phenomena.

Political geographers study how **people** have:

- ✓ organized the land surface into countries and alliances,
- ✓ reasons for doing so,
- ✓ the conflicts that result from the organization.

➤ **Human cultural characteristics such as ethnicity, religion and linguistics are intertwined with the division of the world into political units.**

Political Map of the World



There are over 200 major political units on earth. Most are self-governing states but there are numerous semi-autonomous units as well as areas not recognized as being self-governing.

- All have location on the earth's surface.
- All have borders that had to be decided, drawn, and demarcated.

Geographic Characteristics of States



Location

- **Absolute location:** where on earth is it found (lat/long); aspects of cultural ecology
- **Relative location:** relationship to other countries; aspects of cultural interaction
- **Landlocked:** geographic disadvantage of a state being surrounded by other sovereign states and having no independent access to international space
- **Location on major transportation routes:** countries may benefit from access to these routes (example of relative location)
 - Economic advantages of trade
 - Cultural advantages and liabilities
 - Early receipt of new ideas and technologies via diffusion

Geopolitical Functions of States

BUFFER STATE
An independent but small and weak country between two powerful countries: Nepal, Bhutan (Mongolia between China and Russia)

SATELLITE STATE
A small, weak country dominated by one powerful neighbor to the extent that some of its independence is lost: Eastern European countries during the Cold War dominated by the USSR; can also be a buffer.


Both these situations put the residents at risk, may affect their national identity, foster separatist movements and create an artificial cultural/political environment.

Colonization

❖ **COLONY:** an outpost of one country on land belonging to another, usually by a group different from the colonizers who control it from afar.

Colonies are established to:

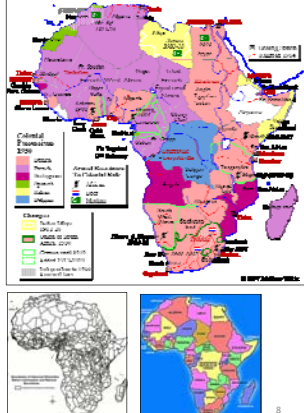
- ✓ gain entry to a new area
- ✓ exploit its resources
- ✓ control strategic routes
- ✓ settle sparsely populated areas
- ✓ counter a rival state
- ✓ spread religion



➤ **Colonial powers may transfer aspects of their culture** (diffusion/acclulturation/assimilation) **to the new land and its people by law, education, language, religion, and customs.**

When Colonies Become Independent

- Colony's borders were usually arbitrary administrative divisions **NOT** based on meaningful cultural or physical lines
- Problems with "nation-building" after independence when borders are not adjusted to local divisions.
- Societal differences surface between the civil servants/administrators and indigenous people.



Cores and Capitals

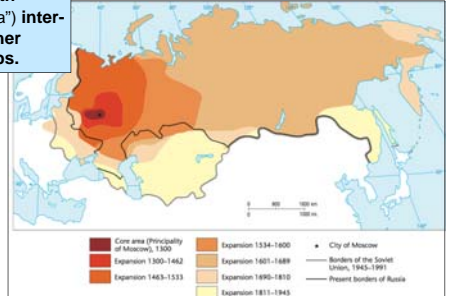
Core Area
Territorial nucleus and main center of industry, commerce, population, political, and intellectual (cultural) life.

Capital

- Focus of political and/or cultural activity.
- Capital is usually in the core and frequently the **primate city**
- In **unitary states:** capital typically associated with core
- In **Federal states:** capital may have been newly created as to not favor one region or ethnicity
- **Regional capital:** site of governmental administration at the regional level (below state or national control).
- **Forward-thrust capitals:** deliberately sited in frontier zone to redistribute population

Development of Russia from the Core

Diffusion of Russian influence from its core area as people from the hearth ("Mother Russia") interacted with other cultural groups.



Periphery Patterns

PERIPHERY:
The **outer edge/margin** of a political unit usually the furthest from the core.

- Often the inhabitants do not have a strong affinity for the central government,
- They may identify with adjacent areas that are part of a different political unit.
- They have separatist tendencies.

EXAMPLES

- Caucasus region of Russia
- Desert region of western China
- Northern Nigeria

Boundaries

❖ **POLITICAL BOUNDARIES**
Lines that establish the limit of a state's jurisdiction and authority (cultural phenomena)




- Serve as powerful reinforcers of cultural variation over the earth's surface
- Are three dimensional
- Designate frontier zones and transition areas

❖ **GEOMETRIC BOUNDARIES**
– Political borders drawn in a regular, geometric manner often without regard for environmental or cultural patterns.

❖ **ETHNOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES**
– Political boundaries that follow some cultural border

Boundary Demarcation

- **Natural (physical) boundaries**
 - Based on recognizable physiographic features such as mountains, rivers and lakes
- **Artificial (geometric) boundaries**
 - Frequently delimited as sections of parallels or meridians or just lines drawn on a map.

13

Boundary Demarcation

Boundaries classified by settlement:

- ✓ **Antecedent** boundaries: Established before the area is well populated.
- ✓ **Subsequent** boundaries: Established after the area has been settled.
- ✓ **Consequent** (ethnographic) boundary: Drawn to accommodate existing cultural differences.
- ✓ **Superimposed** boundary: Ignore existing cultural patterns.

14

Geographic Sources of International Stress



15

Boundaries as Sources of Conflict

Landlocked states

1. Negotiated use of facilities at a foreign port.
2. Negotiated right to travel to that port.
3. In the 20th century signed international conventions permitting the free movement of goods across intervening territories without discriminatory taxes, tolls or freight charges.
4. Some landlocked states have narrow corridor of land that reaches either the sea or a navigable river or designed air corridor for airplanes to follow.

16


Boundaries as Sources of Conflict

Water bodies as boundaries

Requires agreement as to where the boundary line should lie.

Potential trouble spots

- Watersheds and mountain crest lines do not coincide
- Rivers change course over time
- Use of water resources: damming or diverting a waterway



17

Boundaries as Sources of Conflict

Minority group identification

Conflicts can arise if the people of one state claim and seek to acquire a territory whose population is historically or ethnically related to that of the state but is now subject to a foreign government

Potential trouble spots

- **Irredentism:** Desire of a state to gain or regain territory inhabited by people who have historic or cultural links to the country
- Location of an ethnic homeland spans border
- Internal separatist movement with support from across the border

18

Boundaries as Sources of Conflict


Resource disputes
 Neighboring states are likely to covet the resources – whether they be physical or cultural – lying in border areas and to disagree over their use

Potential trouble spots

- Movement of peoples across international border
- Internationally significant resource located on both sides of the border
- Crucial physical or cultural resource on adjacent land in neighboring state

19

Summary of Geographic Sources of International Stress

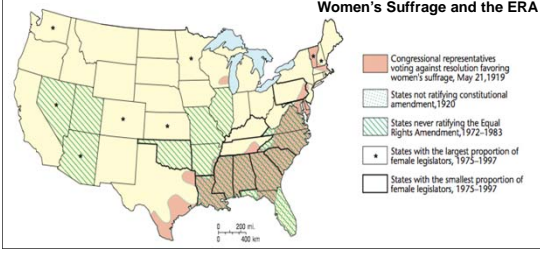


- Corridor:** outlets for Bolivia and Paraguay; access to river draining to another ocean.
- Crestline:** Colonial Spain drew boundary from peak to peak along the spine of Andes.
- Meandering river:** US-Mexico; China-Russia
- Boundary through a lake:** US-Canada; Uganda-Kenya-Tanzania
- Watershed use:** Conflict between Chile and Argentina over source areas of rivers; Tigris and Euphrates in Middle East; Indus River in South Asia
- Minority group expansion:** Hungary claims province of Romania; Basque region of Spain and France.
- Homeland straddling a border:** Kurdistan; Palestine
- Separatist movement:** wars of secession in Nigeria and Sri Lanka
- Seasonal movement of nomads:** Mexican agric workers into US; Sub-Saharan tribes following the rains
- International significant resource:** oil reserves of the Middle East that extend beyond a countries borders (Iraq-Kuwait); fishing banks (UK-Iceland); North Sea oil fields (7 countries)
- Claim based on threat to site:** Israel claiming Golan Hts. from Syria

20

Cultural Diffusion of Political Movements

Women's Suffrage and the ERA

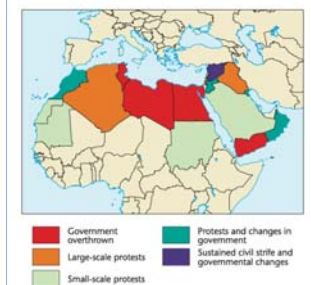


- Congressional representatives voting against resolution favoring women's suffrage, May 21, 1919
- States not ratifying constitutional amendment, 1920
- States never ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972-1983
- States with the largest proportion of female legislators, 1975-1997
- States with the smallest proportion of female legislators, 1975-1997

21

The Arab Spring

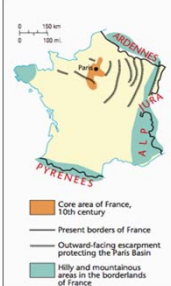
Diffusion of a political-cultural movement across a region.



- Government overthrown
- Large-scale protests
- Small-scale protests
- Protests and changes in government
- Sustained civil strife and governmental changes

22

Political Ecology



- The influence of the habitat on political entities.
- "Folk fortresses"
- Stronghold areas with natural defensive qualities.


23

Heartland vs. Rimland

Theories developed in the 20th cent. before the advent of modern warfare and long-range military technology.

HEARTLAND:
 Inner Eurasia (core) is pivotal because of its isolation from the rest of the world. **Control of the core controls the landmass.**

RIMLAND:
 WWII view that **control of the seas and the seaward margins (periphery) of landmasses** would lead to area and world domination.



24

Politico-Cultural Interaction

Factors in and results of politico-cultural interaction:

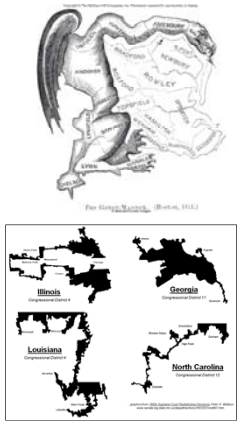
- Voting patterns
- Migration patterns
- Creation of nation-states
- Ethnic separatism

25

Geography of Elections and the Electorate

Electoral geography
The study of the interactions among space, place, and region and the conduct and results of elections.

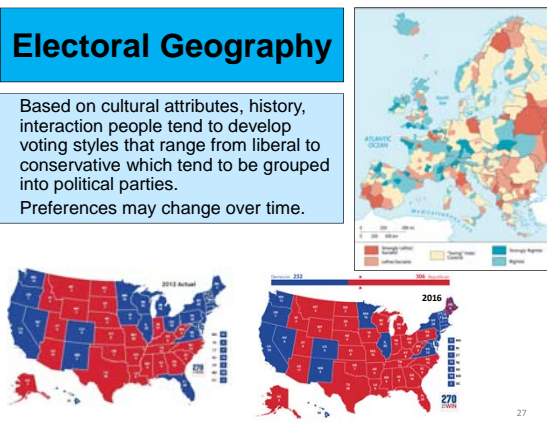
Gerrymandering
The drawing of electoral districts in an awkward pattern to enhance the voting impact of one constituency at the expense of another.



26

Electoral Geography

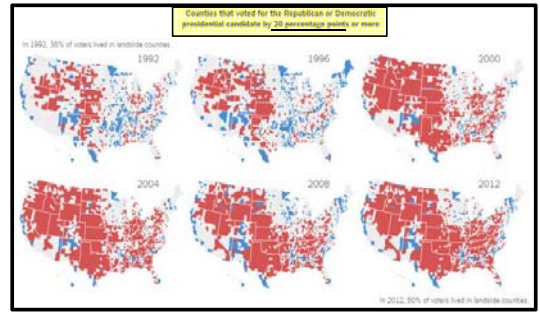
Based on cultural attributes, history, interaction people tend to develop voting styles that range from liberal to conservative which tend to be grouped into political parties. Preferences may change over time.



27

Presidential Vote by County 1992-2012

Counties that voted for the Republican or Democratic presidential candidate by 20 percentage points or more.



28


Political Landscapes

Imprint of the legal code:
Laws affect the cultural landscape.

- **Zoning:** what can or cannot be done to the land or built on it
- Tax collection zones
- School districts
- Changing of signs to reflect control of an outside political force or asserting local control


Physical properties of boundaries:

- Visible vs. invisible.



29

Visible Boundaries



30

