

# 7

## Political Geography

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

This chapter is divided into two major parts: Know the Concepts and Know the Models. The concepts section contains examples of political state units and nationalism, the organization of states, spatial concepts and borders, electoral representation, political-economic systems, and finally, geopolitics. The models section details Mackinder's Heartland-Rimland Theory, Cohen's Shatterbelts, and Cold War Containment Theory.

# KNOW THE CONCEPTS

## UNITS OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

There are a number of political geography terms such as nation and state that we use in everyday speech as synonyms. However, the technical definitions of these terms have specific and important meaning in the geography of politics. Here's how to keep them straight:

**Country:** an identifiable land area

**Nation:** a population with a single culture

**State:** a population under a single government

**Nation-State:** a single culture under a single government

A nation is the same as a **culture group**. "State" implies that there is a **sovereign territory**. **Sovereignty** generally means that a state is fully independent from outside control, holds territory, and that it has **international recognition** from other states or the United Nations. Use these examples to keep the differences in your mind:

England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Great Britain or the British Isles
Han, Manchu, Zhuang, Miao, Uygur, Tibetan, and others	People's Republic of China	China
Anglo-Canadian, Quebecois, and First Nations	Canada (former name Dominion of Canada)	Canada
French, German, Italian, and Romansh	<i>Confoederatio Helvetica</i> (in Latin)	Switzerland (French: <i>Suisse</i> ) (German: <i>Schweiz</i> )

These examples, the United States, and most other sovereign states are **multinational states** made up of a number of different nations represented by the multitude of culture groups who have migrated and intermixed around the world. Multinational, sometimes called **multi-ethnic states**, are most common in the Americas, where there are no nation-states.

## **NATION-STATES**

There are a number of nation-states in which one culture group is represented by a singular government. Many are smaller states or island countries. Although no nation-state is truly made up of only one cultural group, places such as **Japan, Iceland, Tonga, Ireland, Portugal, and Lesotho** (pronounced Lesu-too) are places that have not seen permanent invasion or mass immigration from other culture groups in their histories.

The term nation-state is also applied, theoretically, to multinational states where the state has come to represent a singular and contemporary culture, as opposed to the ancient cultures from which the population originates. One could argue that there is an identifiable American culture in the United States, or a unique Brazilian culture in Brazil. In both of these cases, the new political nation is the result of the blending of several culture groups together along with the idea of political nationalism.

## **NATIONALISM**

**Nationalism** can derive from an existing culture group that desires political representation or independence, or from a political state that bonds and unifies culture groups. Politicians use nationalism as motivation to support the state and oppose foreign or other political influences. Individuals tend to take pride in their nationalist identities, even though they or their neighbors may be from a mix of different ethnic backgrounds.

## **STATELESS NATIONS**

Although many culture groups are politically represented or are part of larger political entities, there are some **stateless nations**, where a culture group is not included or allowed share in the state political process. A few examples:

**Kurds** are an ethnic group spread across northern Iraq, western Iran, eastern Syria and southeastern Turkey. A semi-autonomous Kurdistan has existed in Iraq since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003. However, full independence is limited geopolitically due to Turkish government resistance to their sovereignty, based upon Kurdish Marxist rebels, the PKK, who have been fighting in Turkey for several decades.

**Basques** are an ethnic group in northern Spain and southwestern France who do not have Celtic or Latin cultural or language roots. In fact, their people's origin is poorly understood by historians. Spain has granted limited autonomy to the Basque region around the city of Bilbao, but many Basque nationalists seek full independence and statehood. A militant group, ETA, has used terror tactics to fight against Spanish rule.

Hmong are mountain peoples who have existed in rural highlands isolated from others in Laos, Vietnam, Thailand, and southern China. However, their alliance with the United States against the Communists during the Vietnam War caused many families to leave their traditional homeland. Today many Hmong (pronounced "mung") have resettled in the upper Midwestern states of Wisconsin and Minnesota. Hmong immigrants are featured in the 2008 film *Gran Torino*.

Other stateless nations: Karen, Gypsies (Roma or Romani), Karelians, Tartars, Tuvans, Chechens, Sami, Uyghurs (pronounced Vigers), Tibetans, and Tamils. Some groups have been granted limited autonomy, while others have active nationalist and independence movements. See the section on **irredentism** in this chapter for more on independence and sovereignty in the post-Soviet era.

## ORGANIZATIONS OF STATES

### THE BIG FELLAS

Federal states and confederations are a common approach to government. The United States, Australia, Canada, Germany, Brazil, Russia, and Mexico are all confederations of several smaller states or provinces under a federal government. Like an umbrella, the federal state provides military protection, administers foreign diplomacy, and regulates trade as well as a number of internal administrative (executive branch), legislative, and judicial services across the country. The states each have their own governments, legislatures, regulations and services. The overlapping roles in the administration may seem redundant, but each has their own division of responsibilities. For instance, the federal government regulates interstate trade, whereas states can make rules about the sale of goods within each state.

## THE WEE FELLAS

At the other end of the international scale, **microstates** are sovereign states that despite their very small size still hold the same position of much larger states like the United States or Canada. Many are island states, ports, or city-states, or they sit landlocked with no access to the sea. A list of microstates that are full members of the United Nations (UN):

Andorra	Landlocked
Antigua and Barbuda	Islands
Bahrain	Islands
Barbados	Island
Comoros	Islands
Djibouti	Port
Dominica	Island
Grenada	Islands
Liechtenstein	Landlocked
Luxembourg	Landlocked
Malta	Islands
Monaco	Port and City-state
Nauru	Island
Palau	Islands
St. Kitts and Nevis	Islands
St. Lucia	Island
Samoa (Western Samoa)	Islands
San Marino	Landlocked
Singapore	Port, Islands and City-state

The Vatican City is also a sovereign microstate but is not a member of the UN. It is not a nation-state despite the common religion of its residents, who are mostly clergy drawn from around the world and a small Ethiopian boy's school.

## MULTI-STATE ORGANIZATIONS

**Supranationalism** is the concept of two or more sovereign states aligned together for a common purpose. A number of **supranational organizations** have been formed for the purposes of trade alliances, military cooperation, and diplomacy. The largest of these is the **United Nations** (192 member states) whose purpose is primarily diplomatic. The UN also provides a number of services internationally through its World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Development Program (UNDP), International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), peacekeeping forces, and other smaller directorates such as the UN High Commissariat for Refugees (UNHCR). Each of these units is an important supranational organization in its own right.

## Detailed Example: The EU

Another important supranational organization with several purposes is the **European Union (EU)**. In 2007, the EU grew to 27 member states with a small number of applicant states awaiting membership. The EU was named in 1991 under the Treaty of Maastricht, which expanded the organization's role beyond trade relations. Prior to that, the European Coal and Steel Community (created in 1957) helped strengthen steel production between Italy, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The success of this limited free-trade network encouraged the development of the European Economic Community, "the Common Market" or EEC. By 1973, the EEC eliminated all tariffs on trade goods between its 12 Western European member states.

Today, the EU acts like a federal government for Europe but lacks some of the administrative aspects of other confederations like the United States. The modern EU serves five main purposes:

**Free trade union:** No taxes or tariffs are charged on goods and services that cross the internal borders of the EU. By eliminating these fees, European businesses can save money and be more economically competitive with the United States and Japan.

**Open-border policy:** Between EU member states there are no longer any border controls stations for immigration or customs inspections. People and commercial vehicles cross internal EU borders without stopping. This began with the **Schengen plan** in 1985 when West Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands opened their borders to one another. Workers can now take jobs in other EU states without applying for work permits (some professions may be protected from this).

**Monetary union:** In 2000 the first EU members began converting to the Euro and phasing out their old forms of money. This eliminated the costs of currency exchange fees. Only the United Kingdom retained its own currency, the British pound, due to its high value—converting to the less valuable Euro would have caused significant financial problems in the United Kingdom. New member states have to meet strict EU economic regulations before they can join the monetary union.

**Judicial union:** The European Court of Justice in Luxembourg provides a legal venue for cases between litigants in separate EU member states. With the increase in cross-border trade and labor, there were bound to be lawsuits and contract issues that would require the EU's decisions. In addition, a European Court of Human Rights has been established to preserve civil rights regardless of their member states' local laws.

**Legislative and regulatory bodies:** The 785-seat EU Parliament was established to propose and approve laws within the union. The European Commission is a separate council with one seat for each member state. Each year the presidency shifts to one member state, allowing it to set the year's policy agenda. The European Commission also acts as the executive branch of the union to enact programs and enforce regulations set by the EU Parliament and Council. The EU Commission president is appointed by the European Council.

## The EU as the World's Largest Economy

In sum, EU governance has been successful in creating a singular economy through free trade, open borders, free movement of labor, free exchange of currency, and a level playing field for business and labor in terms of laws and regulations. Instead of 27 small economies, the EU acts as one state economy that is highly competitive with the United States, Japan, and emerging economies like Russia, China, India, Brazil, or a proposed Free Trade Zone of the Americas. In terms of total gross domestic product (GDP), the 2008 *CIA World Factbook* reports the EU has expanded to a nearly 19-trillion-dollar economy compared to the 14-trillion-dollar U.S. economy.

## Something Rotten in Denmark?

Despite the economic success of the EU, a number of problems have emerged from the perspective of its citizens and member states. Even though free-trade, open borders, and the Euro reduced the cost of doing business and reduced the cost of goods and services, the EU government's main source of revenue is a 17.5 percent sales tax, known as the **Value-Added Tax** or VAT. Many complain that the cost of EU governance has significantly increased the cost of many items in Europe. Member state governments have also complained that the European courts have threatened the sovereignty of national and local courts and laws.

Likewise, open borders have made it difficult to control crime and terrorism. Once someone gets inside the EU's borders, he can move around freely regardless of citizenship, making it difficult to stop and apprehend criminals. Externally, the EU has had to strengthen its borders against illegal immigration and the flow of contraband. The term **Fortress Europe** has been used to describe the concept of sealing EU borders. This is a rather difficult problem, since much of the eastern borders of the EU are undefended and only road and rail border crossings are inspected by immigration or customs officers.

## No Constitution for You! Yet...

In terms of further expansion of the EU system of governance, a **European Union Constitution** was proposed for ratification in 2004. The complex 65,000 word document was poorly understood by the citizens and members of parliament who had to vote on the constitution. Concepts like a common EU foreign policy among all states were unclear. Many voters and politicians were concerned about the continued loss of sovereignty for member state governments. Political leftists saw the constitution as being too pro-business. And right-wing sentiment against including Turkey in the EU also resulted in "No" votes against ratification. The constitution was voted down in the Netherlands and France in 2005, thus forcing the European Commission to go back to the drawing board.

## Additional Supranational Organizations

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)	Military
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)	Oil Pricing Cartel
North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)	Free Trade Zone
Organization of African Union (OAU)	Regional Diplomacy
World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Government Loans

## SPATIAL CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

**Territoriality** is the expression of political control over space. The concept of the state implies that the government controls land and the people who live there. **Citizenship** is the legal identity of a person based on the state where he was born or where he was naturalized as an immigrant. Keep in mind that when citizens go outside their state's political borders, they retain their citizen status and thus become an extension of their state (unless they apply for new citizenship as immigrants). This is why we strictly define the state as a population represented by a single government, without mentioning territory. However, don't forget that space matters, as it's not much of a state if it has no land, which can happen in the case of a government in exile, such as the Dutch or Polish governments during World War II.

## POLITICAL BORDERS

The borders between political states and political sub-unit areas (counties, parishes, parliamentary districts, and city limits) are strictly **finite** lines. Political boundaries, as expressions of political control, must be definable and clear. Sometimes the **physical geography**, such as rivers or other water bodies, define boundaries, and sometimes border lines are measured surveys based on treaties or other agreements between states. Non-physical boundaries often reflect **cultural divisions**, but these are not always accurate. Such borders can be the result of aristocratic land holdings from Feudalistic eras, or be the front lines at the secession of armed conflict between states—however, treaties can change these lines.

## Outside The Lines

Countries with large **expatriate** populations (citizens living outside of their borders) have to provide consular services in large foreign cities. Citizens living in foreign countries often have to visit their country's embassies or consulates to process legal documents, passports, and visa applications. When citizens get trapped in war zones or disasters in foreign countries, it's up to their government's diplomats and military to get them out.



## Enclave and Exclave

Borderlines may be finite, but they can become quite irregular in pattern especially where the cultural borderlines become fuzzy. An **enclave** is a minority culture group concentrated inside a country that is dominated by a different, larger culture group. This could be as simple as an ethnic neighborhood or a large area such as Quebec. As part of the 1994 Dayton Peace Accords, several enclaves were formally established within Bosnia to separate warring Serb, Croat, and Muslim communities.

An **exclave** is a fragmented piece of sovereign territory separated by land from the main part of the state's territory. Occasionally, neighboring states attempt to claim exclaves in the name of cultural nationalism. Often armed conflicts result, but sometimes diplomatic negotiations result in official permanent exclaves. Other times states purchase territory or receive fragments of territory under peace treaties. Islands are not considered exclaves. A few examples of exclaves:

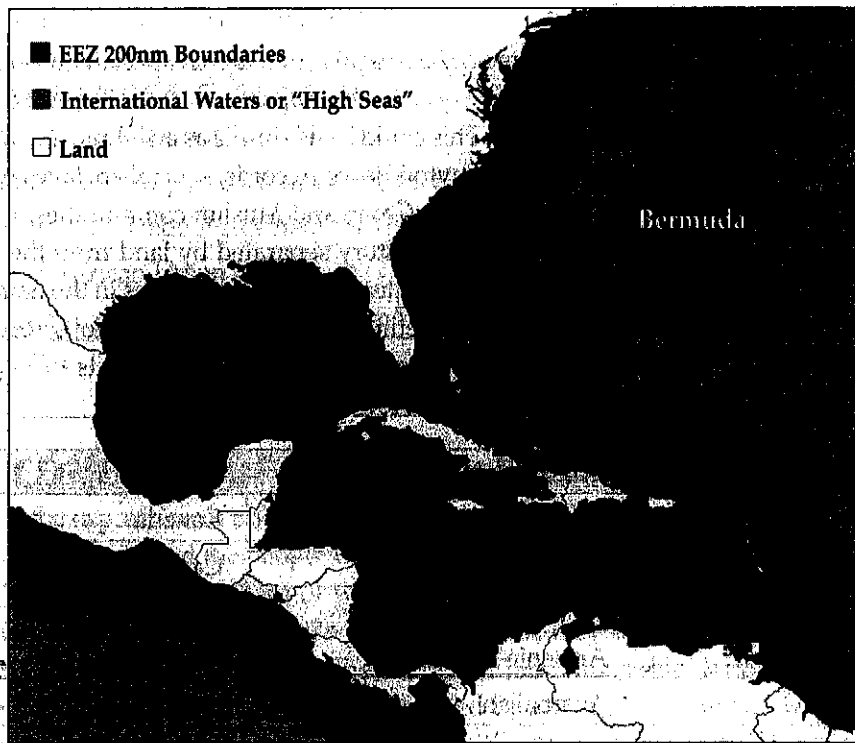
Alaska	United States	Canada
Port Roberts	United States	Canada
Kaliningrad (Koenigsberg)	Russia	Lithuania, Belarus
Nagorno-Karabakh	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Nakhchivan	Azerbaijan	Armenia
Cabinda	Angola	Dem. Rep. of Congo
Musandam	Oman	United Arab Emirates
Llivia	Spain	France
Ceuta and Melilla	Spain	Morocco

## Water Borders at Sea

Historically, borders at sea were poorly defined, and each country had its own laws regarding where territorial claims began and ended. Often, more than one sovereign state claimed the same piece of water. This all changed in 1982 with the **United Nations Conference on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS)**, which proposed standard oceanic boundaries for all UN member states, and was fully ratified in 1994. The border system under UNCLOS is in two parts:

**Territorial Sea:** Sovereign territory includes the area of sea from shore out to the 12-nautical-mile limit. Within 12 nautical miles all the laws of a country apply.

**Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ):** Exclusive economic rights from shore out to the 200-nautical-mile limit. Within 200 nautical miles of its shores, a state controls all aspects of natural resource exploration and extraction. This includes fisheries, oil and gas production, salvage operations, and permits for such activity. 200 nautical miles is beyond the shallow water **continental shelf** in almost all cases.



**EEZ Boundaries and High Seas off the Eastern United States**

The **high seas** are technically outside of the 12-mile limit. Past that line, cruise ships can open their casinos and ship captains gain the authority to marry couples or arrest thieves onboard their ships. These are provisions made under **Admiralty Law**, a part of international law that dictates legal procedures on the high seas. Beyond the 200-mile limit, international fishing fleets can hook or net whatever ocean life they choose and in unregulated amounts.

The only exceptions are when international treaties limit the capture of certain species. The 1986 **International Whaling Commission** moratorium on commercial whale hunts banned whaling after centuries of hunting dangerously depleted populations. Norway and Japan still hunt whales, claiming their hunts are for scientific research. This claim is heavily criticized by environmental organizations who state that whale meat still makes it way to market in these countries.



### International Political Borders Compared to EEZs and Territorial Seas

#### Political Borders on the Map, Not EEZs

When you look at the map above you can see that normal political boundaries and the real EEZ boundaries are very different. The cartographic borders are often rectangular around islands. In reality, territorial seas and EEZs create circular boundaries, especially around islands—each of which extends a country's EEZ out another 200 nautical miles.

#### Overlapping Borders at Sea and Disputes

The UNCLOS makes provisions for a UN arbitration board to settle disputes regarding boundaries at sea. Often countries with overlapping sea claims generally agree to split the lines halfway. Where it becomes difficult is when uninhabited small islets, exposed reefs, and sandbars above water are claimed by more than one country. It can take years of negotiation to settle such disputes, and occasionally troops are deployed to precariously small pieces of land, just to claim rights to the surrounding EEZ. For example, two areas of the South China Sea, the **Spratly Islands** and the **Paracel Islands**, are claimed concurrently by China, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei. Oil is believed to be under both island groups, and these are areas of potential future armed conflict if arbitration fails.

## Boundary Origins and Border Types

This topic can be confusing due to the varied terminology used to describe processes behind boundary creation and the types of borders that exist. Let's see if we can simplify this:

### Boundary Origins

- Antecedent:** Boundary lines that exist from prehistoric times
- Relic:** Former state boundaries that still have political or cultural meaning
- Subsequent:** Lines resulting from conflict or cultural changes (war, migration, etc.)
- Superimposed:** Lines laid down for political reasons overtop cultural boundaries

### Important Historical Examples:

- Antecedent:** French-Spanish border along the Pyrenees
- Relic:** Scotland-England border after The Act of Union in 1652
- Subsequent:** German-Polish border after 1945; Kaliningrad to the USSR in 1946
- Superimposed:** Sub-Saharan Africa after the Berlin Conference of 1884; Yugoslavia and Iraq after the 1919 Treaty of Versailles (Each of these resulted in recent conflicts.)

### Boundary Process

- Definition:** When borders are claimed, negotiated, or captured
- Delimitation:** When borders are put on the map
- Demarcation:** When markers are placed on the ground to show where borders lay

### Border Type

- Physical:** Natural boundaries—rivers, lakes, oceans, mountains, or deserts
- Cultural:** Estimated boundaries between nations, ethnic groups, or tribes
- Geometric:** Boundaries surveyed mostly along lines of latitude and longitude

### Border Disputes

- Definitional:** When border treaties are interpreted two different ways by states
- Locational:** When the border moves, like a river changing course or lake drying up
- Operational:** When borders are agreed to, but passage across the border is a problem
- Allocational:** When a resource lies on two sides of a border. Who gets what?

## Important Historical Examples:

**Definitional:** Russian-Japanese Kuril Islands under Soviet control in 1945

**Locational:** India-Bangladesh territory along the Ganges-Brahmaputra River Delta

**Operational:** New passport requirements for entry into the United States after September 11, 2001

**Allotational:** Mexico-United States river allocations for irrigation and drinking water on the Colorado River and Rio Grande (Rio Bravo)

## Border Conflicts: Frontier War or Peace?

Historically, when land was either unexplored or unsurveyed, the term **frontier** was used to describe the open and undefined territory. There are a few disputed small frontier regions in the world today. The only remaining large land frontier is Antarctica, where the Antarctic Treaty (1959) has set aside the continent (actually several large islands covered by an ice cap) for scientific research and prohibits any military action and commercial mineral or energy extraction.

## Peaceful Resolution to Border Conflicts

Prior to the 1846 Oregon Treaty that set the border at 49° North latitude, the western border between Canada and the United States was undefined. Much of the frontier region of what is today Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Alberta, and British Columbia was claimed concurrently by Great Britain and the United States. Diplomacy was the key to a peaceful settlement of the border dispute, but it nearly led to war as many in the United States were heard to say, "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!"—the claim that the U.S. border should be 54°40' North. Not all parts of the world have been so lucky to resolve their frontier claims peacefully. In fact, many border treaties have led to violence later on.

## Post-Colonial Boundary Conflicts

An international example of a former frontier dispute that has led to conflict today is in Central Africa. The **Conference of Berlin** (1884) was a diplomatic meeting between the European colonial powers to set the internal political boundaries in Africa. Africa was one of the last areas of European colonial expansion. Most colonies were in coastal areas, but the interior of the continent had only recently been explored by Europeans. Diplomats at the conference went about carving up the continent's interior and settling disputed claims. The final agreed-upon map is very similar to the political boundaries in Africa today. However, there are many problems with the 1884 border design that did not emerge until after **decolonization** in the late twentieth century. Most African colonial states achieved **self-determination** as fully independent sovereign states between 1960 and the early 1990s.

The main problem with the European-set boundaries in Africa is that they do not match the cultural boundaries. This **superimposed boundary** situation is what Africans refer to as the **Tyranny of the Map**. Instead of the large artificial nation-states that the Europeans envisioned, the reality is that political allegiance in Sub-Saharan Africa is based upon tribal identity, and at a much smaller relative scale. The result has been that within post-colonial African states, a number of tribes have been grouped together in a confined area, some of whom have long precolonial histories of conflict.

### Tyranny of the Map Example: Rwanda

An example of one such postcolonial conflict zone is Rwanda, where in 1994 ethnic Hutus and Tutsis fought to control the small landlocked and mountainous country. Tutsis had migrated to the region some 400 years earlier, but upon independence from Belgium in 1962, Hutus went about **ethnic cleansing**, forcing many Tutsi refugees into the former Zaire and to Uganda. In 1994, after a plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi was shot down, large-scale reactionary violence erupted by Hutus against local Tutsis, who were blamed for the crash. In response, Tutsi refugees flooded back into the country to fight back. In the end, each ethnic group lost around 500,000 people to the violent **genocide**.

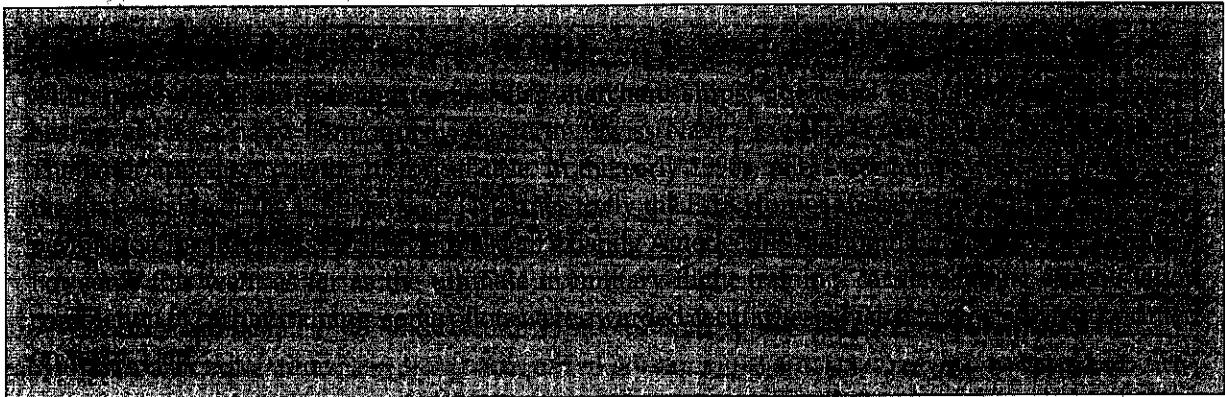
In the years following, Hutu versus Tutsi violence has spilled over to Burundi and eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where ethnic-based violence and fighting continues today. The Eastern Congo is seen by many researchers to be the next area of widespread **armed conflict in Africa**. Due to ethnic fighting in and along the D.R. of Congo and invasion by the armies of Uganda and Zambia, the region's 1884 borders are all but meaningless lines on the map.

<b>Kashmir</b>	India, Pakistan, China	Mountainous region and British Partition in 1948 (Remains in conflict)
<b>Empty Quarter</b>	Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., Oman	Open sand dune desert (Rûb al-Khali) (Saudis and Yemen settled in 2000)
<b>Neutral Zones</b>	Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait	Uqair Protocol of 1922 and open desert (Saudis and Kuwait settled in 1970) (Saudis and Iraq settled in 1991)

## TERRITORIAL MORPHOLOGY

The shape of a country is often what helps you identify it on a map. To some degree, the shape of a country also impacts its society and external relations with other countries. Here is a list of the major types of state morphology (shape):

Compact:	Shape without irregularity	Nigeria, Colorado
Fragmented:	Broken into pieces; archipelagos	Philippines, Newfoundland
Elongated:	Appears stretched-out, long	Chile, Tennessee
Prorupt:	Has a panhandle or peninsula	Italy, Michigan
Perforated:	Has a hole(s) (country, large lake)	South Africa, Utah
Landlocked:	Has no sea or ocean borders	Switzerland, Wyoming



### Territorial Change

In addition to wars and other **subsequent** border changes, there are a few other ways in which state territory can change shape. **Decolonization** after World War II significantly reduced the area and number of territorial and colonial holdings of the European powers and the United States. Although most areas were granted independence, some colonial holdings were **incorporated** and residents integrated with full citizen status. Examples include Hawaii, Alaska, and the French *departments* of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Reunion, and French Guyana. Residents of these places have full voting rights, pay taxes, and receive benefits just like the other citizens of the United States and France.

**Annexation** is another term used to describe when territory is added as a result of a land **purchase** or when a territorial claim is extended through **incorporation**. The United States originally purchased Alaska from the Russian Empire in 1867 for \$7,000,000 in gold—a bargain of Manhattan-esque proportion—and it became a full state in 1948. The U.S. Virgin Islands resulted from a cash sale of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix by a financially strapped Danish government in 1917 (during World War I).

## Capitals

We can't forget that each state has to have a capital city. Why? There will always need to be a **seat of government** where political power is centered. In a way, political power is a form of currency just like money. And just as market areas need financial centers of exchange, politicians need a place to have organized exchanges of power. Occasionally they make laws and have elections, as well. Federal states can have several scales of capitals, just as they have several scales of sub-state units.

Akron, county seat of Summit County, Ohio	Local, County, or Parish
Columbus, state capital of Ohio	State, Provincial, or Regional Scale
Washington, D.C., capital of the United States	National (nation-state), Federal

Most countries have one national capital, but some have more than one. Often this is done to share power across different regions of the country. A few examples of countries with more than one capital:

South Africa	Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Cape Town
Bolivia	La Paz, Sucre
Netherlands	Amsterdam, The Hague
Ivory Coast	Abidjan, Yamoussoukro

Occasionally countries change the location of their capital. Sometimes this is due to a shift in political power or can be due to congestion in the old capital. Some new capitals are often **planned capital cities** which are located in places where cities did not previously exist:

Washington, D.C.	New York City	United States
Brasilia	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil
Canberra	Sydney	Australia
Abuja	Lagos	Nigeria



Other capitals were moved to existing cities for political reasons.

Berlin	Bonn, East Berlin	Germany	Reunification
New Delhi	Calcutta	India	Center of colony
Ankara	Istanbul	Turkey	Congestion, centrality
Moscow	St. Petersburg	Russia	Russian Revolution
Jerusalem*	Tel Aviv	Israel	Israeli annexation of West Bank

\*(Some countries do not officially recognize this—the U.S. Embassy is in Tel Aviv)

## ELECTORAL POLITICS AND INTERNAL BOUNDARIES

### Who Can Vote?

Suffrage in terms of age, race, and gender has varied historically from state to state. The Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution set the voting age at 18 in 1920. Women gained the right to vote in these selected examples:

New Zealand	1893
Canada	1917
United Kingdom	1918 (but only after age 30 until 1928)
United States	1920
Mexico	1947
Honduras	1955
Paraguay	1961

In addition to gender, race has historically been a barrier to voting rights. Apartheid in white, minority-ruled South Africa, which racially segregated almost all aspects of life and residential geography, also denied the voting rights of non-white citizens. In 1994, the first full and free elections in South Africa resulted in the presidency of former political prisoner and civil rights activist Nelson Mandela, who was from the African Xhosa tribe (pronounced Ho-sah). This was the world's last case of official government restriction, or *de jure* (by law) on voting due to race. However, in many countries there is still *de facto* (a matter of fact) racial and ethnic discrimination that restricts voting by minority citizens, via fear and intimidation tactics.

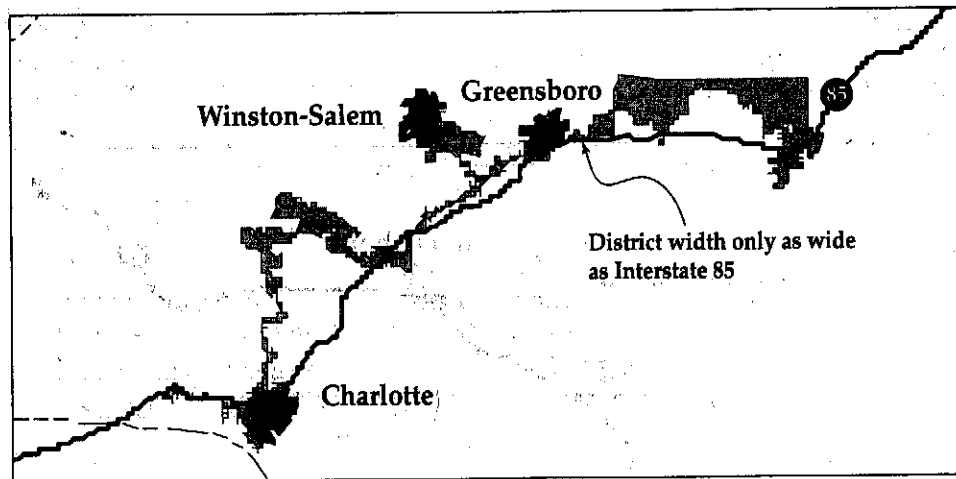
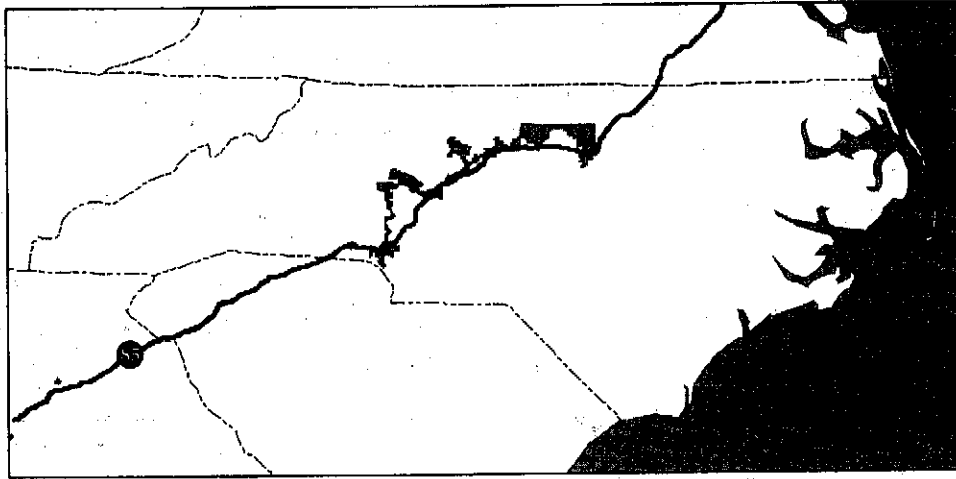
## Voting for Local and Regional Representation

All democracies have some form of parliamentary system where at least one lawmaking body or house has **popular representation**. Each country has its own system regarding the number of seats and the size of **voting districts**. In the United States, division of the 435 seats of the House of Representatives is apportioned relative to each state's population. Every state is divided into a number of congressional districts, each district having one seat in the Congress; California has the most, at 53, and the least-populated state, Wyoming, has 1. In the United Kingdom and Canada, members of parliament (MPs) are selected from local constituencies based upon population, but unlike the United States, these are averaged from across the country. Due to its relatively dense population, Ontario holds 106 of the House of Commons' 308 MPs. Senators in Canada are appointed.

## The Electoral College

In the United States, presidential elections are decided through voting by the **electoral college**. After the November presidential election, electoral votes are assigned state by state in December, based on the popular vote in each state. Most states are "winner take all," but a few, like Maine and Nebraska, split electoral votes proportional to the popular vote. The number of electoral votes is based on the total number of representative seats, plus the two senators' seats from each state—the District of Columbia also has 3 electoral votes. It follows that California has the most electoral votes, with 55, and Wyoming the least, at 3. It takes at least 270 (>50 percent) electoral votes to win the presidential election. If the candidates tie or have fewer than 270 due to a third party, then Congress chooses the new president.

Every ten years following the census, the United States **reapportions** the 435 seats of the House of Representatives. In many states, this generally causes some changes to the number of congressional seats and, as a result, the number of electoral votes a state has. If the number goes up or down (and sometimes even when the number doesn't change), state governments draw new congressional district border lines to reapportion districts into equal-sized populations.



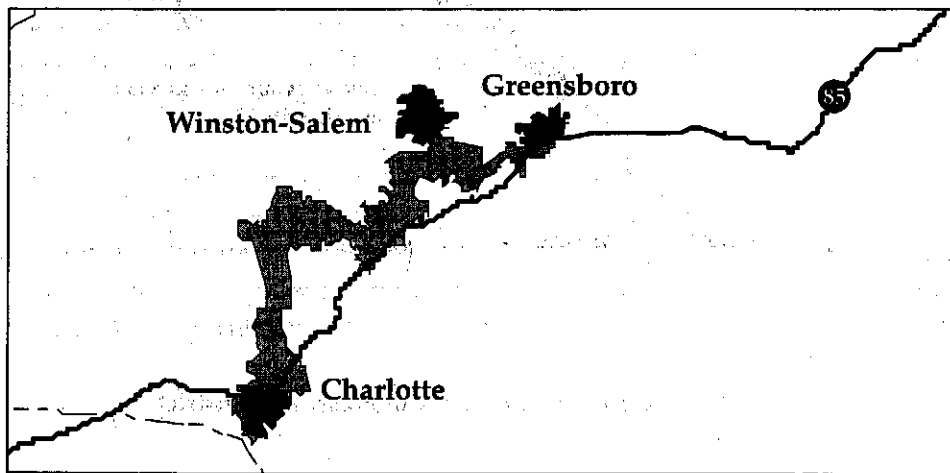
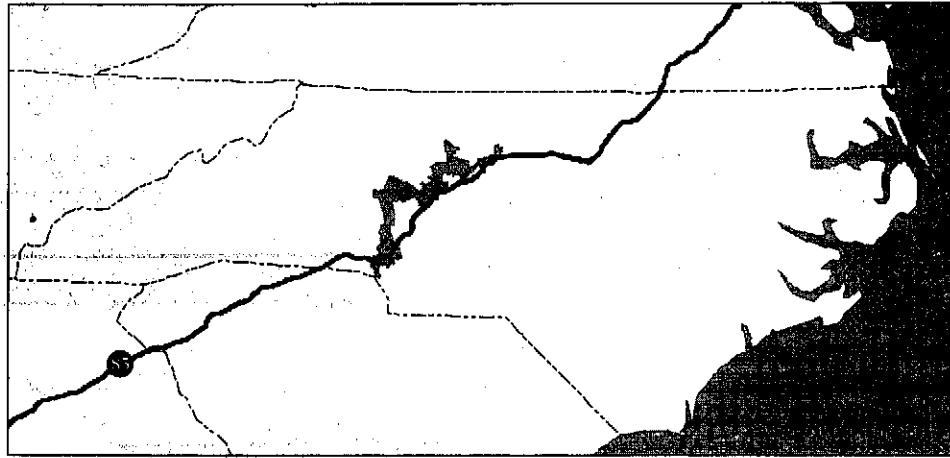
Map of the North Carolina 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

### Gerrymandering

Sometimes reapportionment mapping is done in a straightforward manner with regional or compact districts. Other times the shapes of new or redrawn districts are very irregular. The irregularly shaped districts that are highly elongated and prurpt are often referred to as **gerrymandering**, named for Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry who first attempted irregularly shaped districts in 1812.

In 1990 and 2000, a number of gerrymanders were attempted that tried to stack votes guaranteeing congressional support for one particular party within each district, making the outcomes of elections predictable and in the favor of the political majority in state government. Others were attempted that created "minority-majority districts" where lines were drawn to only encompass minority population centers.

In the 1992 case of North Carolina, Republican state leaders drew the new 12th district along Interstate Highway 85, connecting a number of African-American communities along a narrow corridor over 200 miles long. The reapportionment was challenged in court and in 1993 the U.S. Supreme Court found the redistricting unconstitutional, resulting in a redrawn district for the 1998 election cycle.



**Redrawn Map Approved by the Supreme Court in 1997**

## POLITICAL ECONOMY

In terms of current and historical context, it is important to keep in mind the concept of political economy when you are discussing a country (especially on the essays). Why political economy? For one, it's often difficult to discuss the political situation in a state without explaining the economic aspects. In addition, these political-economic systems have important links to other parts of the AP Human Geography material. Here are the major categories to consider, with examples:

### FEUDALISM AND ITS DECLINE

Feudal political economies operated with the vast majority of land and wealth being controlled by an **aristocracy**—a **peerage** of lords, earls, marquis, barons, dukes, princes, kings, and queens. Conversely, the vast majority of the population, as peasants, commoners, serfs, or slaves, were poor farmers and laborers who worked the land controlled by aristocrats. Peasants paid rents and had their harvests taxed for the right to live on and work the land. This system kept peasants in a cycle of debt, known as **debt peonage**, as they were never able to fully pay off rents and taxes.

Feudal states tended to have **absolute monarchy**. This is where the supreme aristocrat, a king, prince, or duke, is both **head of state** and **head of government**, and therefore does not share power with anyone. Like medieval-style feudalism, the concept of absolute monarchy has diminished over time and mostly exists in the Islamic world. A few absolute monarchies exist today:

Saudi Arabia

Brunei

Morocco (limited power-sharing)

Bhutan (may change soon)

Emirates within the United Arab Emirates

### THE DECLINE OF FEUDALISM AND EMPIRES

Revolutions and wars from the late 1700s to the 1900s forced many feudal states to accept some form of democracy. Events such as the French Revolution of 1789 inspired many monarchs to accept power-sharing with commoners to avoid losing control of their states. Under **constitutional monarchy**, the supreme aristocrat remains **head of state**, but the leader of the elected parliament is the **head of government**, with integrated legislative and executive powers. In most cases this is a **prime minister** or **premier**, who appoints senior members of parliament to be ministers or secretaries of executive-branch departments.

In most constitutional monarchies, the monarch retains the power to dismiss parliament; appoints judges, ambassadors, and other officials; is commander and chief of the military; and retains significant land holdings and estates. However, the monarch's political power is mostly diminished to a symbolic role, and they hold a small but important position in dictating policy and proposing laws.

Examples of constitutional monarchies:

- Great Britain
- Belgium
- The Netherlands
- Japan
- Norway
- Denmark
- Sweden
- Spain
- Thailand
- Luxembourg
- Kuwait
- Jordan
- Bahrain
- Monaco
- Cambodia

### Example: The British Aristocracy and Government

The current form of constitutional monarchy in Great Britain has been in place since the Magna Carta was signed in 1215. Feudalism has reigned throughout, but in the Magna Carta there was some degree of power-sharing with the aristocracy and later with commoners voting in elections (1689).

Today, feudal rents to local aristocrats are still technically paid in a number of rural areas of the United Kingdom, although many are symbolic and small fees. A majority of Britons live in urban areas and are not subject to these fees. Many rural farms are now owned privately, though some may still be required to pay feudal rents.

The British aristocracy's structure and role has also been modified in recent years. Traditionally, aristocratic peers sat in the **House of Lords**, the upper house of parliament, which also serves as the supreme court. The House of Lords numbers more than 740 members. When the king or queen elevated someone to the peerage, a new seat was added. Eventually, they had too many members. Beginning in 1999, Queen Elizabeth II reformed the house with two types of members. Hereditary peers, who at death pass their title and seat to their firstborn son, were reduced in number, and life peers, mainly senior public servants who were rewarded with a title, kept their title and seat only for their lifetime. The new House of Lords has 732 members, which will be reduced to 620.

Since the late 1600s, the power has steadily increased the **House of Commons**, the lower house of parliament. The Commons has 646 seats apportioned to local districts across the U.K.; Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland also have regional parliaments of their own. The Prime Minister (PM) is head of government, but is also a member of parliament (MP). Generally the PM is the political leader of the party with the most MPs. Other senior MPs from this **ruling party** serve as ministers

of the executive branch of government. This is another example of how parliamentary democracy integrates the three branches of government.

### **Commonwealth Countries**

Most but not all member states of the **Commonwealth of Nations** (independent former parts of the British Empire) retain the British monarch as their head of state. These commonwealth countries have their own parliaments and prime ministers as head of government. Each also has a royally appointed governor-general as the crown representative in the country. The governor-general's role, like the monarch's, is a mostly symbolic and ceremonial position. These countries are nonetheless considered independent sovereign states. Yet they do retain some minor political link to the U.K.—most provide military support to the U.K. in times of war. A list of countries who claim the British monarch as head of state:

Canada

Jamaica

Dominica

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

New Zealand

Australia

Fiji

Papua New Guinea

Belize

Guyana

Bahamas

Antigua and Barbuda

Grenada

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, and Kenya are a few of the commonwealth members that do *not* claim the British monarch as head of state. However, all commonwealth nations have parliamentary governments, which integrate executive, legislative, and judicial powers, like that of Great Britain. In addition, the Commonwealth of Nations is an important supranational organization that provides special trade, education services, government funding, and preferred immigration status between member governments and citizens.

Former colonies that are now dependent territories (not sovereign states) of the U.K. are not Commonwealth members, and are still controlled from London with limited local governance; these include Anguilla, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos, British Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Montserrat, the Falkland Islands, St. Helena, Ascension Island, and Gibraltar.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY: FREE-MARKET DEMOCRACY

Generally, countries with elected representative parliamentary systems such as the United States, the United Kingdom, commonwealth countries, and other constitutional monarchies or republics are classified as **free-market democracies**. Internal to a state, this system generally relies upon balancing the relationship between the elected representative government, its citizens, and business interests. In most cases, there is a variable system of regulation and taxation by the state. As a result, the marketplace is not totally free, as it would be in a completely unregulated *laissez-faire* economic system, but it's close enough.

Government regulatory influence of the private lives of its citizens and practices of businesses is usually limited to areas concerning public safety and economic protections. The point of democracy is that people have a say in who makes the rules and thus have some influence over the rule-making process.

### What's a Republic?

Without going in too deeply into your AP Government material, keep in mind that France, Germany, Italy, and many former colonial states are technically republics, under the broader category of free-market democracy. Some republics, like France, are centrally governed from a single capital. Others, like Germany or the United States, are confederations that apportion some government power of legislation and administration to their component states or provinces (*Länder* in Germany). The main thing to keep in mind is that **republics** are free of aristocracy or monarchical control. The governments are fully under the control of the "common" people, as opposed to hereditary monarchy.

Unlike parliamentary systems that assign legislative, executive, and judicial power to the same people, republics generally have a **separation of powers**. Here, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government are held by separate groups of people that keep each other in check. This may seem less efficient, but it reduces the potential for corruption of the whole government. If one branch's leadership fails or its practices are called into question, the other branches can act to correct problems or replace leadership if necessary.

### Problems Within Republics

This is not to say that republics are perfect systems, as you might feel if you read too much Plato. The written **constitutions** of these governments need to be flexible enough to allow governments to deal with political and other crises when they occur. The United States has had two constitutions (the former being the Articles of Confederation, which did not work out) and the French have had five different types of government since the revolution. Hence, the current government system in France is known as the "Fifth Republic." There is no perfect constitution, but they can be amended over time.

Another problem is that wealthy businesspeople and corporations have replaced the aristocracy in terms of the control of money, land, and resources. Their personal and corporate **political influence** overshadows that of many thousands of private citizens. The purchase of political favoritism to influence the setting of regulations is a constant problem in republics, as it is in other democracies, especially within the legislative branch. This has created uneven power relations in free-market democracies.



Another type of separation is sometimes employed to blunt the power of the executive branch is to have separate presidents and prime ministers (or chancellors in Germany). In the United States, Mexico and Argentina, the president is both head of state and head of government. In most other republics there is executive separation. Depending on the country, this can be done in a couple of ways. In France, the president is head of government and the prime minister is head of state, but it's the opposite in Italy. Aye! It's too variable to keep straight, but make sure to know a couple of examples.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY: MARXIST-SOCIALISM

Under **Communism**, Karl Marx's political-economic theories attempted to right the wrongs of feudalism and inequalities of capitalism in free-market democracies. One of the main goals of **Marxism** was to create a class-free society where there were no inequalities in terms of wealth or power. To do this, the state would own all land and industry, the government would direct economic productivity, and everyone regardless of labor position would earn the same amount of money.

The key to this working was the **planned economy**, which did not rely on supply and demand like capitalism. The central government would calculate the economic needs of the state, its industries, and people. Then the government would set **quotas** for each individual operational unit of agricultural or manufacturing production to meet these needs. Theoretically, the productivity of the economy would result in a collective wealth that would be shared equally across the population. It's a utopian ideal that the system should create a harmonious peaceful social existence, but **Communism** in practice failed to reproduce Marx's utopia.

### What Happened with Communism?

You may have heard the statement, "A good idea in theory but not in practice." This is true for **Communism**: Marx died in 1883 and the first Communist country, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union), was established in 1917, with the fall of the czar's absolute monarchy in Russia. This time gap is significant. Had Marx seen how his ideas were put into practice, he'd have "blown a fuse," "had a cow," "had kittens"—pick your own analogy. On an essay you could describe him as upset or disagreeable.

There were a number of unintended consequences to the Russian revolution, including a protracted and bloody civil war, human rights violations, murders on the part of the Communist government, and forced resettlement of over a million citizens. Despite all this, Soviet Communism emerged functioning under Marx's basic principles. Under Stalin, the USSR developed **Five-Year Plans**, which were comprehensive long-term economic plans that dictated all production in minute detail. In the 1930s, when the rest of the world was suffering through the poverty of the Great Depression, the Soviets were doing comparatively well.

However, fifty years later the USSR was falling apart. The **devolution** of the Soviet system was due in part to several political-economic problems in the USSR. One thing that would have caught Marx's eye was that, in reality, **three classes of Soviet citizens** emerged early in the Soviet Union. Most were workers, as Marx had envisioned his **proletariat**. However, to achieve an important position in Soviet society, like government officials, professors, or factory managers, you had to join the **Communist Party**. Party members made up of about 6 percent of the USSR population and enjoyed many perks

such as special stores, nicer homes, and personal cars. Likewise, a **military officer class** emerged that had a similarly high quality of life in comparison to the regular working class.

Working class people were resentful. But what could they do? Heavy-handed secret police and laws that made public protest punishable by hard labor in prison camps (known as *gulags*) kept open criticism to a minimum. Creative, inventive, and industrious people stagnated. Another reason for this was that there was a **lack of incentive** in the system that would motivate people to have better lives. It didn't matter if you were a brain surgeon or a garbage man; you got the same monthly pay. Sure, there are some perks to being a doctor, but were these enough to struggle through examinations and years of training with no financial reward? This was a problem.

The lack of incentive also affected economic productivity. Neither farms nor factories had any reason to produce more food or products than what was stipulated in government quotas. This resulted in a **lack of surplus**, leaving many stores with few items on the shelf and lines of people waiting to receive rations for food and clothing. More about the effects of the Cold War on the devolution of the USSR are ahead in this chapter.

These problems have also plagued other communist countries, and now only two insignificant cases of Soviet-style Communism remain: Cuba and North Korea. To see what has happened with economic reforms in Communist China and Vietnam, see chapter 9.

### What about the Socialism Part?

The positive things that came out of Communism were mainly in the realm of infrastructure and social welfare. Health care is a good example. Prior to Communism in the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba there had been almost no health care available to the common people. Socialism meant that everyone had a right to health care, and early on hospitals, clinics and rural travelling doctor programs were established. Similarly, infrastructure programs for public schools, free universities, drinking water, care for the elderly and public transit were built to improve the efficiency and quality of life in Communist society. It may not look glamorous today, but it successfully replaced the utter poverty that existed under the former feudal and corrupt capitalist societies in these countries.

These socialist successes impacted the non-Communist world as well during the latter twentieth century. Government leadership and control of health care, education, and pensions are Marxist-socialist ideals which have since been incorporated in Western free-market democracies like Canada and Great Britain.

## GEOPOLITICS

The term **geopolitics** refers to the global-scale relationships between sovereign states. The theme of political-economic conflict between democracies and Communist countries during the Cold War (1945–1991) is a common area of geopolitical questions on the AP Human Geography Exam. This will be covered in more detail in the Know the Models section at the end of this chapter. Here are a number of other important geopolitical issues that you need to be prepared for on the exam.

## CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES

These are two terms that students mix up all the time. Here are the definitions and a way to remember which one is which:

**Centripetal forces** are factors that hold together the social and political fabric of the state. (Pedals make the bike go.)

**Centrifugal forces** are factors that tear apart the social and political fabric of the state. (A centrifuge separates blood into its different parts.)

In every country there are a number of forces at work that both reinforce and destabilize the state. When the balance shifts too far in the category of centripetal forces, the survival of the state is at risk and indicates the likelihood of **armed conflict**—in the form of an **internal civil war**, or the possibility of conflict spilling over into **external cross-border war**.

Political beliefs of nationalism	Ethnic, racial, or religious difference or conflicts
A strong and well-liked national leader	Political corruption
An effective and productive economy	Failing economic conditions
Effective government social welfare programs	Natural disasters or a wartime defeat

### Example: Yugoslavia

As we mentioned in the Cultural Conflicts section of chapter 6, Yugoslavia was an artificial state created after World War I that had several different ethnic and religious groups living within its borders. The post-World War II Communist leader of the country was the Croatian Josep Tito. As a Croat who fought alongside Serbians against the Nazis, Tito was a good choice as president. He became a centripetal force representing the two largest ethnic groups in the country. A strong nationalist belief in Communism among Yugoslavians helped Tito build an economically strong and socially harmonious multi-ethnic society. These were additional centripetal forces that held the state together.

When Tito died in 1980, the lack of an effective multi-ethnic leader to replace him created a political **power vacuum** that opened the way for different nationalist leaders representing different ethnicities to attempt to seize power for themselves and their constituents. These ethnic differences, combined with differences in religion between groups, had many histories of conflicts and warfare. These became powerful centrifugal forces that ripped apart the Yugoslav social and political fabric and, in combination with the fall of Communism in Europe, doomed the country to ethnic violence and dissolution. In a way, you can think of Tito's death as a centrifugal force in itself.

## Balkanization and Irredentism

The case of the former Yugoslavia is also an important example of **balkanization**. This is due to the fact that Yugoslavia sits in the Balkan Peninsula, which has historically been divided among a large number of ethnic and religious groups—hence the term “balkanization.” The definition of balkanization is when the political landscape goes from a larger state to several smaller states. In the last one hundred years of European history, the continent has geopolitically gone from being dominated by large **empire states** to being dominated by several small **nation-states**.

Sovereign states in Europe:                      1909: 27 states                      2009: 45 states

After World War I, much of the early cases of balkanization were due to a realignment of German borders and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire into six sovereign states. After World War II, some borders changed but the number of states changed only slightly. It was after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union in 1991 that the political landscape began to break apart.

Old State: (end date)	<b>Yugoslavia</b> (between 1991–2008)	<b>Austro-Hungarian Empire</b> (1918)	<b>USSR</b> (1991)
New States:	Slovenia Croatia Serbia Bosnia-Herzegovina Montenegro Macedonia Kosovo (disputed)	Poland (part) Czechoslovakia Hungary Austria Yugoslavia (part) Liechtenstein	Russia Belarus Ukraine Estonia Latvia Lithuania Moldova Georgia Armenia Azerbaijan Kazakhstan Uzbekistan Tajikistan Kyrgyzstan Turkmenistan
Old State: (end date)	<b>Czechoslovakia</b> (1993)		
New States:	Czech Republic Slovakia		

## Irredentism as the Cause of Balkanization

**Irredentism** tends to follow one of two definitions: when a minority ethnic group desires to break away from a multi-ethnic state and form its own nation-state, or break away and align itself with a culturally similar state. Almost all of the cases of balkanization discussed in the previous section fall into these two categories. Cases of irredentism continue, and Russia is one of the most significant situations where a number of groups are seeking independence or **annexation** by a neighboring sovereign state that is culturally similar.

**Chechnya** is one such place. Chechens, like more than 25 other **autonomous republics** in Russia, were granted limited local self-governance by the Russian Federation. However, Chechens are ethnically Turkic peoples who are predominantly Muslim; very different from Slavic, Eastern Orthodox Christian Russians. It stands to reason that both religion and ethnicity are the centrifugal forces in this case.

Soon after the fall of Communism, Chechens began to declare independence from Russia. As a result the Russian government moved in troops and a regional armed conflict has ensued. Russia fears the loss of oil resources and pipelines in the region, but a larger geopolitical issue looms. If Russia were to allow Chechnya to become independent or be annexed by Azerbaijan, then many of the other autonomous republics would push for secession, leaving the Russian Federation without much of its current land and resource.

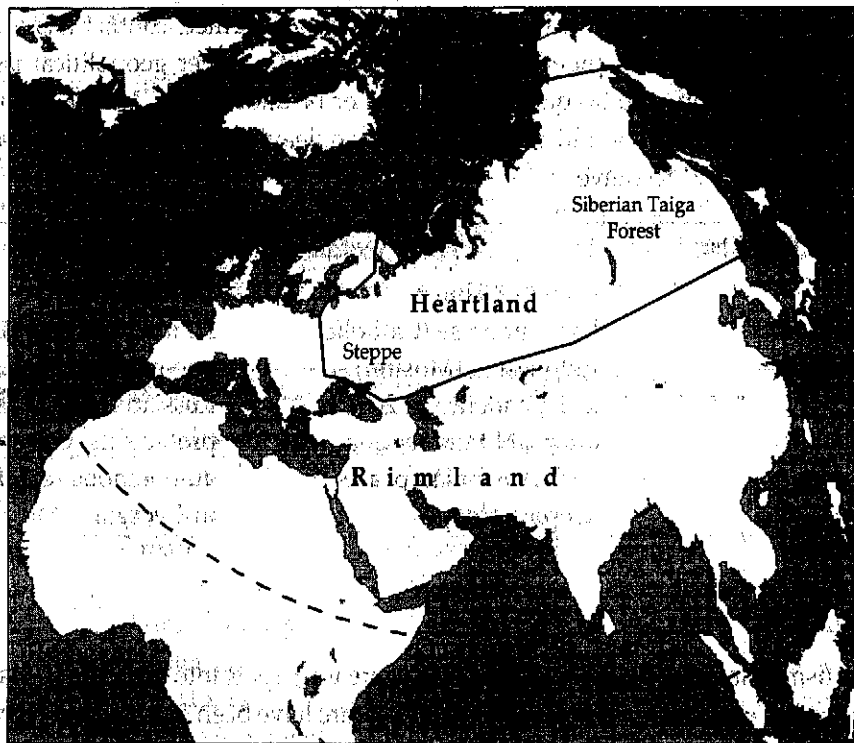
Location:	Island of <b>Timor</b>	<b>Ossetia</b>
Irredentists:	East Timorese (Catholic)	South Ossetia (Muslims)
Resistant State:	Indonesian (Muslim)	Rep of. Georgia (Christian)
Status:	Independence in 2002 after UN Intervention with Australian peace-keeping troops	Russian military as of 2008 protects the Ossetian autonomous region in Georgia

### Reunification

In a few irredentism cases, nations or culture groups were torn apart into separate states as a result of war or other historical events. In the post-Cold War era there have been a few cases of **reunification** of note: (East and West) Germany, Yemen (North Yemen and Yemen Democratic Republic) and the return of the Canal Zone to Panama. There are also some places where, despite potential armed conflict, there is occasional talk of reunification between China and Taiwan, and North and South Korea.

## KNOW THE MODELS

### HEARTLAND-RIMLAND MODEL



#### The Agricultural and Resource Heartland Is Surrounded by Rimland

The main geopolitical model in the AP Human Geography course encompasses the two world wars and the Cold War. In 1904, British geographer Halford Mackinder proposed what would become known as the **Heartland-Rimland** model. Mackinder's model was an effort to define the global geopolitical landscape and determine areas of potential future conflict. He identified that agricultural land was the primary commodity that states were interested in. Several states with limited land area wanted to expand their territory—as they had done by expanding their colonial empires. However, they also eyed one another's European farming areas.

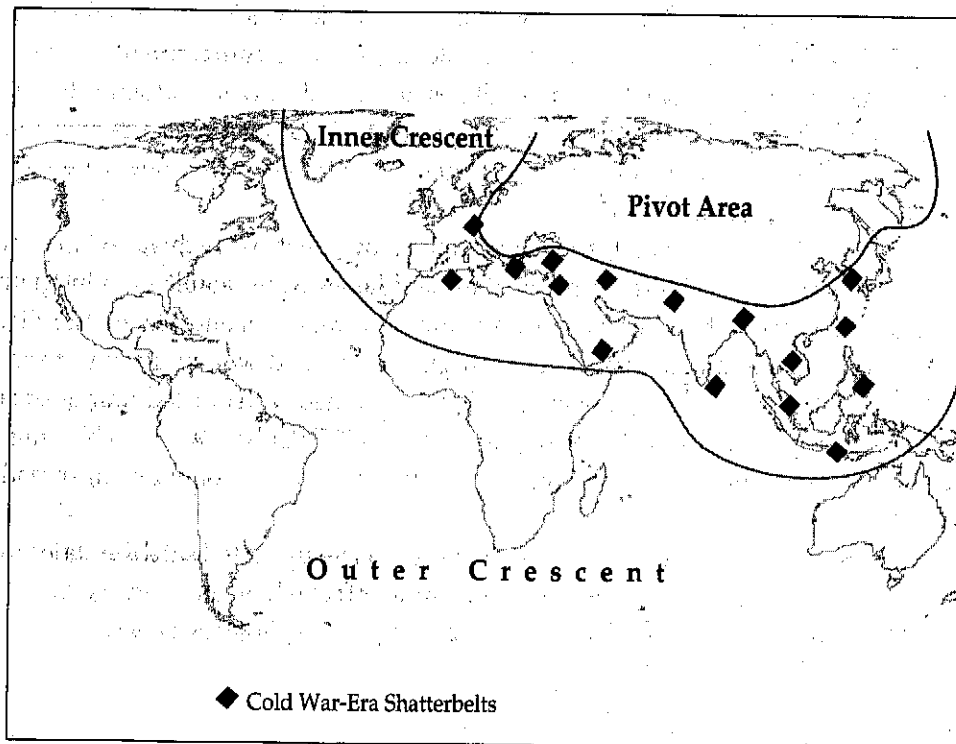
The largest of these was the **Eastern European steppe**, a very productive area of grain cultivation mostly controlled by the Russian Empire at the time. This, combined with the mineral and timber-rich region across the Urals into Siberia, was identified by Mackinder as the **Heartland**. It was this portion of the earth's surface that bordering **Rimland** states such as the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Romania were potential invaders of. The Rimland also contained other **landwolves** eager to grab at neighboring territory such as France and Italy. Likewise, there were **seawolves**, such as Great Britain and Japan, who would use their navies to leverage geopolitical power.

## Predictive Power of the Model

In effect, Mackinder accurately predicted the battle lines of the Eastern Front during World War I. In 1921, he revised the model, expanding the Heartland further into Central Europe. In essence, Mackinder stated that the same geopolitical situation remained, with land still being the primary commodity of conflict: the thing that countries were willing to fight over.

From 1904 onward, Mackinder points out that the areas of future conflict are the borderlines between the Heartland and Rimland. This prediction comes true again with the 1931 invasion of Manchuria by the Japanese, which some Asian scholars identify as the actual start of World War II. The European border conflict areas in the model are also realized with the 1939 German invasion of Poland, a country within the redrawn Heartland.

## SHATTERBELT THEORY



**Conflicts Are Likely to Occur in the Inner Crescent**

## The Cold War: Shatterbelts and Containment Theory

Mackinder died in 1947, but his legacy lived on in Cold War-era geopolitical models and theory. In 1950, American geographer Saul Cohen proposed the **Shatterbelt Theory**. He modified Mackinder's Heartland into the "Pivot Area" and Rimland into the "Inner Crescent." The rest of the world became the "Outer Crescent," including the United States. His land-based concept was that Cold War conflicts would likely occur within the Inner Crescent. He pointed out several Inner Crescent areas of geopolitical weakness that he called Shatterbelts. Like Mackinder's earlier predictions, Cohen's Shatterbelts accurately identified numerous areas where wars emerged between 1950 and the end of the Cold War in 1991.

## CONTAINMENT THEORY

Some of these conflict areas were ones that the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China would attempt to capture to create **buffer states**, lands that would protect them by creating a surrounding buffer of sympathetic countries. Influenced by Mackinder and Nicholas Spykman's theoretical work, U.S. diplomat George Kennan first proposed the strategic policy of **containment** to the American government in 1947. In this proposal, the United States and its allies would attempt to build a containment wall around the core Communist states. Anytime the USSR or China attempted to expand the realm of influence politically or militarily, the forces of NATO and other democratic state allies should be deployed to stop them.

This was a successful strategy at first, and Communist movements were thwarted in Greece, Iran, and Malaysia. At the same time, West Germany, Italy, and Japan were rebuilt as industrialized free-market democracies as part of the containment wall, under the Marshall and MacArthur Plans. However, Communists reached a military stalemate in Korea in 1953, and won military victories against the French (1958) and Americans (1975) in Vietnam. These combined with quick Communist takeovers of Hungary (1956), Czechoslovakia (1969), as well as Angola (1975), Cuba (1959) and Nicaragua (1979) were evidence of containment theory's limitations put into practice, as Communism spread even to parts of the Outer Crescent.

The United States and allied states had to contain these Soviet-supported **satellite states** to prevent Communism from spreading further. They feared a **domino effect** where one state would fall to Communism and then inspire and support Communist uprisings in neighboring states.

## Containment's Long-Term Success

Despite the failings of the containment approach, Communism was limited to a large degree to the pivot area and a number of buffer states. The containment effort had a devastating effect on the economy of the Soviet Union and its allies. At certain points during the Cold War, it is estimated that upwards of 50 percent of the USSR's gross national product was focused on military production and other activities to support the expansion of Communism. This stressed the Soviet economy to the breaking point and created further shortages of food and consumer goods for its citizens, which in turn created further problems within Soviet society and the Communist government.

By the 1980s cracks began to appear in the social fabric of the USSR. Numerous dissidents publicly criticized the government's expansion efforts and costly nuclear arms arsenal. Similarly, the mothers



of the Red Army soldiers killed in the **War in Afghanistan** (1979–1989) publicly protested in the streets of Moscow, despite the potential of arrest and deportation to Siberia. They learned that not even the most coldhearted Communist leaders could jail the mother of a soldier killed in action. Continuing the containment tradition, monies spent by the United States in the 1980s to arm Afghan Mujahidin rebels with arms, including Stinger shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles, paid off in the end with Soviet troops returning in defeat. This was a centrifugal force that reverberated throughout the USSR, and its government fell two years later in 1991.

## **KEY TERMS**

- balkanization
- boundary types
- centrifugal forces
- centripetal forces
- colonialism
- EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone)
- enclave
- exclave
- gerrymandering
- Heartland-Rimland Theory
- irredentism
- nation
- nation-state
- political economy
- sovereignty
- state
- stateless nation
- supranationalism
- territorial morphology
- territorial seas

