



POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

A Divided World

From the breakup of empires to regional differences in voting patterns, from the drawing of international boundaries to congressional redistricting in the U.S. electoral system, from the resurgence of nationalism to separatist violence, human political behavior is inherently geographical. As geographer Gearóid Ó Tuathail has said, **political geography** “is about power, an ever-changing map revealing the struggle over borders, space, and authority.”

political geography

The geographic study of politics and political matters.

Ó Tuathail has said, **political geography** “is about power, an



Region

How is political geography revealed in regions? The theme of region is essential to the study of political geography because an array of both formal

state

A centralized authority that enforces a single political, economic, and legal system within its territorial boundaries. Often used synonymously with “country.”

and functional political regions exist. Among these, the most important and influential is the **state**.

A World of States

The fundamental political-geographical fact is that the Earth is divided into nearly 200 independent countries or states, creating a diverse mosaic of functional regions (Figure 6.1, pages 190–191). The state is a political institution that has taken a variety of forms over the centuries, ranging from Greek city-states, to Chinese dynastic states,

to European feudal states. When we talk about states today, however, we mean something very specific and historically recent. States are independent political units with a centralized authority that makes claims to sole jurisdiction over a bounded territory. Within that territory, the central authority controls and enforces a single system of political and legal institutions. Importantly, in the modern international system, states recognize each other's **sovereignty**. That is, virtually every state recognizes every other state's right to exist and control its own affairs within its territorial boundaries.

sovereignty

The right of individual states to control political and economic affairs within their territorial boundaries without external interference.

Closer inspection of Figure 6.1 reveals that some parts of the world are fragmented into many different states, whereas others exhibit much greater unity. The United States occupies about the same amount of territory as Europe, but the latter is divided into 45 independent countries. The continent of Australia is politically united, whereas South America has 12 independent entities and Africa has 54.

The modern state is a tangible geographical expression of one of the most common human tendencies: the need to belong to a larger group that controls its own piece of the Earth, its own territory. So universal is this trait that scholars coined the term **territoriality** to describe it. Most geographers view territoriality as a learned cultural response. Robert Sack, for example, regards territoriality as a cultural strategy that uses power to control an area and communicate that control, thereby subjugating the inhabitants and acquiring resources. He argues, for example, that the precise marking of borders is a practice originally unique to modern Western culture. The modern territorial state, he

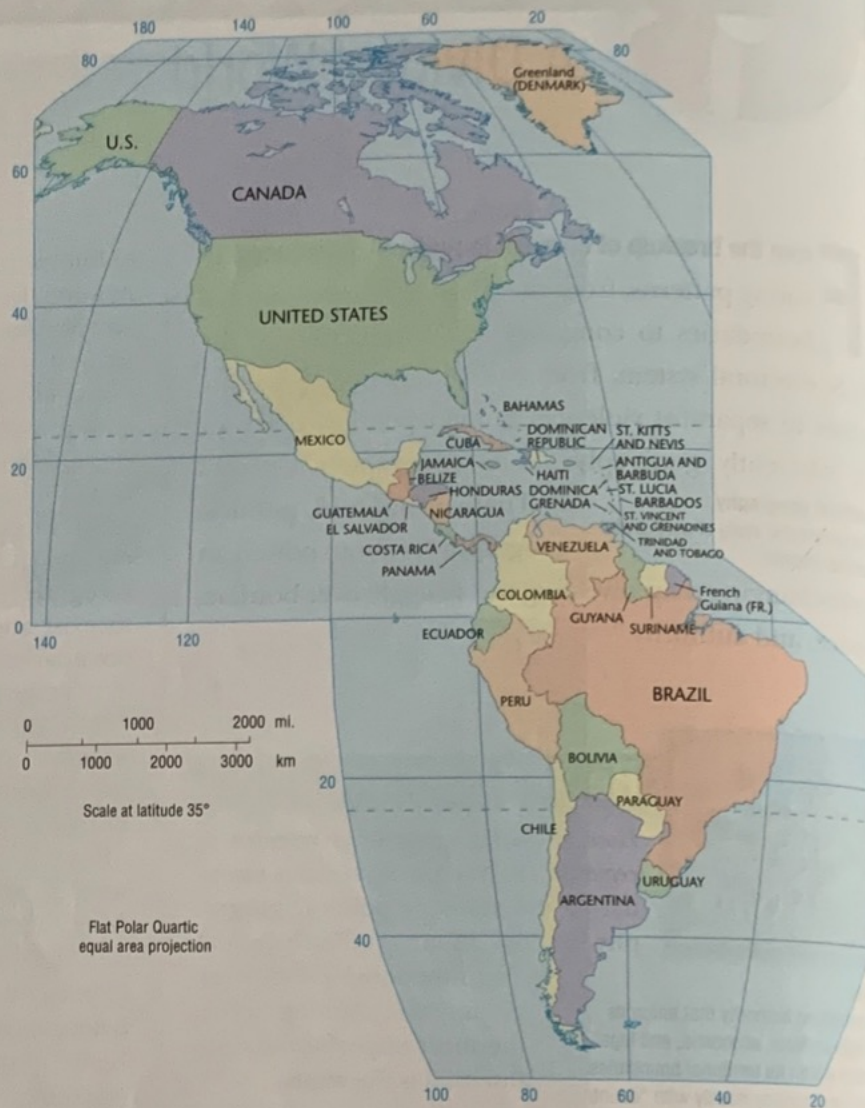
territoriality

A learned cultural response, rooted in European history, that produced the external bounding and internal territorial organization characteristic of modern states.

Independent Countries

Abbreviations

A	AUSTRIA
AL	ALBANIA
B	BELGIUM
BA	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA
BF	BURKINA FASO
BG	BULGARIA
BOTS	BOTSWANA
BY	BELARUS
CH	SWITZERLAND
CZ	THE CZECH REPUBLIC
D	GERMANY
EG	EQUATORIAL GUINEA
EST	ESTONIA
GBI	GUINEA BISSAU
H	HUNGARY
HR	CROATIA
IC	IVORY COAST
K	KOSOVO
L	LUXEMBOURG
LT	LITHUANIA
LV	LATVIA
MK	MACEDONIA
NL	NETHERLANDS
RCA	CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
RL	LEBANON
RO	ROMANIA
RU	RUSSIA
SK	SLOVAKIA
SLO	SLOVENIA
S	SERBIA
M	MONTENEGRO
TC	TURKISH CYPRUS
TL	TIMOR-LESTE
TM	TURKMENISTAN
UAE	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
WAG	THE GAMBIA
WAL	SIERRA LEONE
ZW	ZIMBABWE



Most of the countries on this map have homepages on the Worldwide Web. Visit The Human Mosaic online to learn more about them.

colonialism

The building and maintaining of colonies in one territory by people based elsewhere.

claims, emerged rather recently in sixteenth-century Europe and diffused around the globe through European colonialism.

Political territoriality, then, is a thoroughly cultural-geographical phenomenon. The sense of collective identity that we call nationalism (see page 195) springs from a

learned or acquired attachment to region and place. Geography and national identity cannot be separated.

Distribution of National Territory An important geographical aspect of the modern state is the shape and configuration of the national territory. Theoretically, the more compact the territory, the easier is national governance. Circular

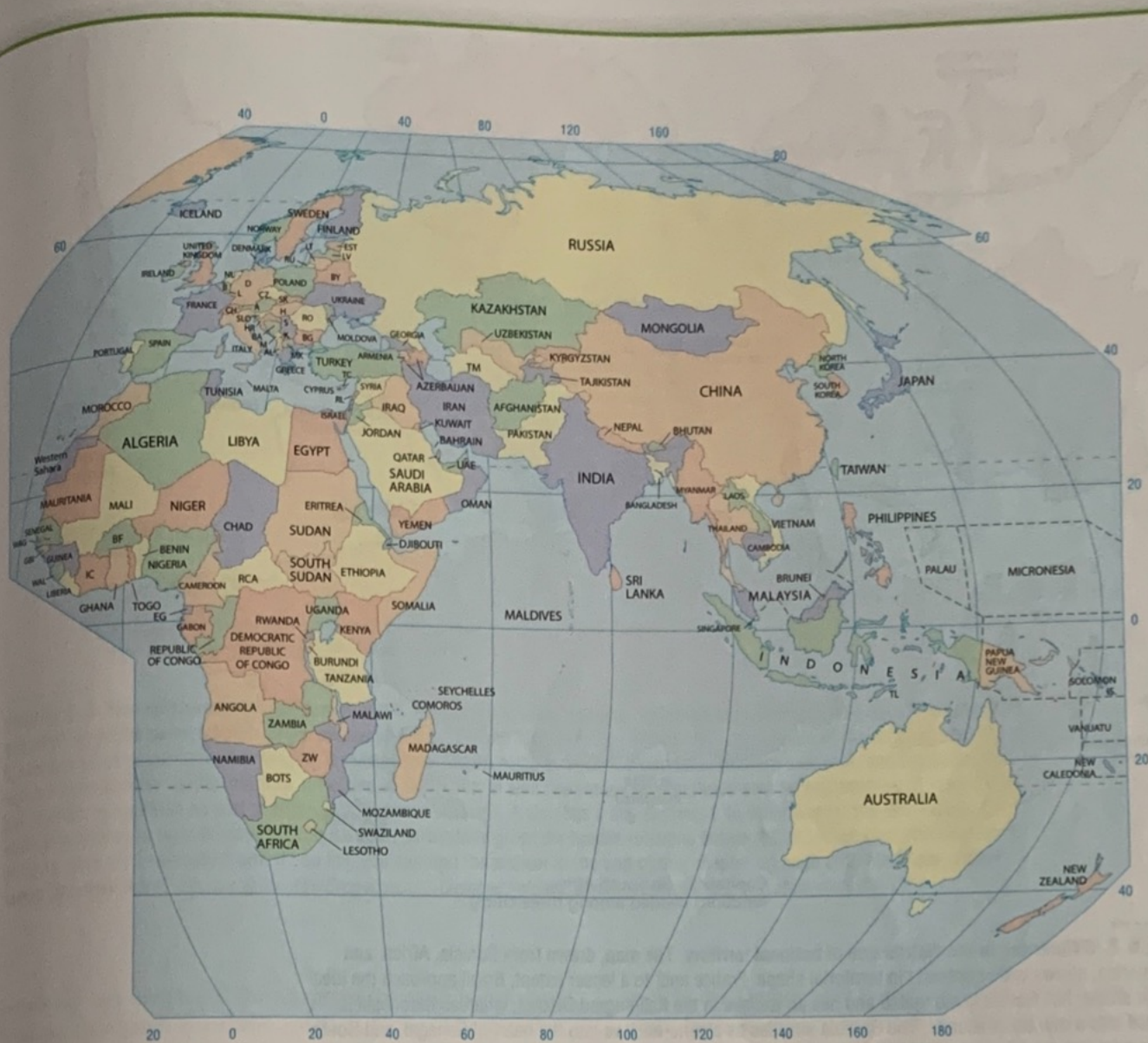


FIGURE 6.1 The independent countries of the world. In the twentieth century, the map was in rapid flux, with a proliferation of countries. This process began after World War I with the breakup of such empires as those of Austria-Hungary and Turkey, then intensified after World War II when the overseas empires of the British, French, Italians, Dutch, Americans, and Belgians collapsed. More recently, the Russian-Soviet Empire disintegrated.

or hexagonal forms maximize compactness, allow short communication lines, and minimize the amount of border to be defended. Of course, no country actually enjoys this ideal degree of compactness, although some—such as France and Brazil—come close (Figure 6.2, page 192).

Any one of several unfavorable territorial distributions can inhibit national cohesiveness. Potentially most damag-

ing to a country's stability are enclaves and exclaves. An **enclave** is a district surrounded by a country but not ruled by it. Enclaves can be either self-governing (e.g., Lesotho in Figure 6.2) or an exclave of another country. In either case, its presence can pose problems for the surrounding country. Potentially just as disruptive is the

enclave
A piece of territory surrounded by, but not part of, a country.



FIGURE 6.2 Differences in the distribution of national territory. The map, drawn from Eurasia, Africa, and South America, shows wide contrasts in territorial shape. France and, to a lesser extent, Brazil approach the ideal hexagonal shape, but Russia is elongated and has an exclave in the Kaliningrad District, whereas Indonesia is fragmented into a myriad of islands. The Gambia intrudes as a pene-enclave into the heart of Senegal, and South Africa has a foreign enclave, Lesotho. Chile must overcome extreme elongation. *What problems can arise from elongation, enclaves, fragmentation, and exclaves?*

pene-enclave, an intrusive piece of territory with only the smallest of outlets (e.g., The Gambia in Figure 6.2).

exclave
A piece of national territory separated from the main body of a country by the territory of another country.

Exclaves are parts of a national territory separated from the main body of the country to which they belong by the territory of another (e.g., the Kaliningrad District in Figure 6.2; **Figure 6.3**). Exclaves are particularly undesirable if a hostile power holds the intervening territory because defense of such an isolated area is difficult and makes substantial demands on national resources. Moreover, an exclave's inhabitants, isolated from their compatriots, may develop separatist feelings, thereby causing additional problems. Pakistan provides a

good example of the national instability created by exclaves. Pakistan was created in 1947 as two main bodies of territory separated from each other by almost 1000 miles (1600 kilometers) of territory in northern India. West Pakistan had the capital and most of the territory, but East Pakistan was home to most of the people. West Pakistan hoarded the country's wealth, exploiting East Pakistan's resources but giving little in return. Ethnic differences between the peoples of the two sectors further complicated matters. In 1971, a quarter of a century after its founding, Pakistan broke apart. The distant exclave seceded and became the independent country of Bangladesh (see Figure 6.1). Even when a national territory is geographically united,

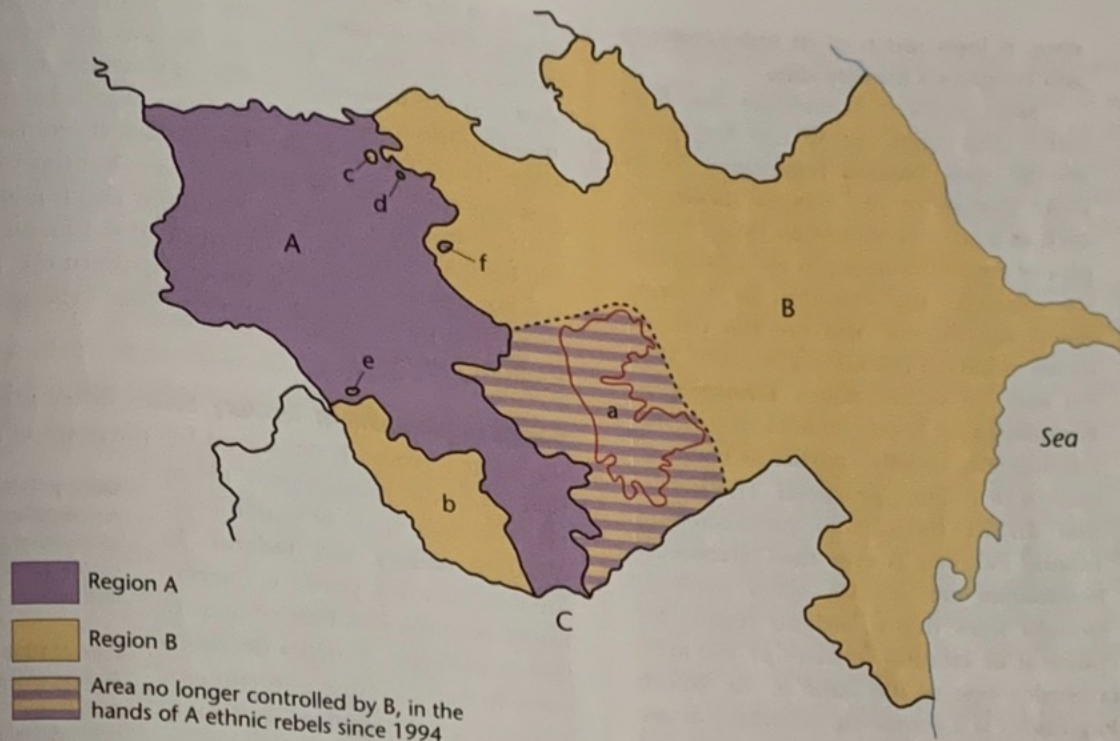


FIGURE 6.3 Two independent countries, A and B. A seeks to liberate region a, where a population speaking the same language and adhering to the same religion as the people of A live. In a war lasting from 1990 to 1994, the people of region a seceded from B, and a tenuous ceasefire was arranged. B, meanwhile, has an exclave, b, on the opposite, western side of A, and the people of region b form another ethnic minority, unrelated to B. Country B also possesses several much smaller enclaves—c, d, and e, the last of which is regarded as part of b (an exclave of an exclave!). A also has a tiny exclave, f. In other words, the distribution of national territories is troublesome to both A and B, particularly given the hostile relations between them. These are real countries. Using an atlas, try to identify them. If you fail, you can find the answer at the end of this chapter on page 229. **Have any recent events occurred here?** (Sources: Office of the Geographer, U.S. Department of State, personal communication, 1997; Smith et al., 1997: 37.)

instability can develop if the shape of the state is awkward. Narrow, elongated countries, such as Chile, The Gambia, and Norway, can be difficult to administer, as can nations consisting of separate islands (see Figures 6.1 and 6.2). In these situations, transportation and communications are difficult, causing administrative problems. Several major secession movements have challenged the multi-island country of Indonesia; one of these—in East Timor—succeeded in 2002 in creating the first new sovereign state of the twenty-first century (see Figure 6.1). Similarly, the three-island country of Comoros, in the Indian Ocean, is troubled today by a separatist movement on Anjouan Island (see Figure 6.1).

The shape and configuration of a country can make it harder or easier to administer, but they do not determine its stability. We can think of exceptions for all of the territorial forms in Figure 6.2. For example, Alaska is an exclave of the United States, but it is unlikely to produce a secessionist movement similar to the one in Bangladesh. Con-

versely, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nigeria both have compact territories and both have suffered through secessionist wars. Geography is an important factor in national governance, but it is not the only factor.

Boundaries Political territories have different types of boundaries. Until fairly recent times, many boundaries were not sharp, clearly defined lines but instead were referred to as zones called **marchlands**. Today, the nearest equivalent

marchland

A strip of territory, traditionally one day's march for infantry, that served as a boundary zone for independent countries in premodern times.

buffer state

An independent but small and weak country lying between two powerful countries.

to the marchland is the **buffer state**, an independent but small and weak country lying between two powerful, potentially belligerent countries. Mongolia, for example, is a buffer state between Russia and China; Nepal occupies a similar position between India and China (see Figure 6.1). If one of the neighboring countries assumes control of the buffer

satellite state

A small, weak country dominated by one powerful neighbor to the extent that some or much of its independence is lost.

natural boundary

A political border that follows some feature of the natural environment, such as a river or mountain ridge.

ethnographic boundary

A political boundary that follows some cultural border, such as a linguistic or religious border.

geometric boundary

A political border drawn in a regular, geometric manner, often a straight line, without regard for environmental or cultural patterns.

The U.S.–Canada border west of the Lake of the Woods (about 93° west longitude) is a geometric boundary, as are most county, state, and province borders in the central and western United States and Canada. Not all boundaries are easily categorized; some boundaries are of mixed type, composites of two or more of the types listed.

relic boundary

A former political border that no longer functions as a boundary.

state, it loses much of its independence and becomes a **satellite state**.

Most modern boundaries are lines rather than zones, and we can distinguish several types. **Natural boundaries** follow some feature of the natural landscape, such as a river or mountain ridge. Examples of natural boundaries are numerous, for example, the Pyrenees lie between Spain and France, and the Rio Grande serves as part of the border between Mexico and the United States. **Ethnographic boundaries** are drawn on the basis of some cultural trait, usually a particular language spoken or religion practiced. The border that divides India from predominantly Islamic Pakistan is one case. **Geometric boundaries** are regular, often perfectly straight lines drawn without regard for physical or cultural features of the area.

Finally, **relic boundaries** are those that no longer exist as international borders. Nevertheless, they often leave behind a

trace in the local cultures. With the reunification of Germany in the autumn of 1990, the old Iron Curtain border between the former German Democratic Republic in the east and the Federal Republic of Germany in the west was quickly dismantled (Figure 6.4). In a remarkably short time span, measured in weeks, the Germans reopened severed transport lines and created new ones, knitting the enlarged country together. Even so, remnants and reminders of the country together. Even so, remnants and reminders of the old border remained, as it continued to function as provincial boundaries within Germany. Furthermore, it still separated two parts of the country with strikingly different levels of prosperity.

Spatial Organization of Territory States differ greatly in the way their territory is organized for purposes of administration. Political geographers recognize two basic types of spatial organization: **unitary** and **federal**. In

unitary countries, power is concentrated centrally, with little or no provincial authority. All major decisions come from the central government, and policies are applied uniformly throughout the national territory. France and China are unitary in structure, even though one is democratic and the other totalitarian. A federal government, by contrast, is a more geographically expressive political system. That is, it acknowledges the existence of regional cultural differences and

unitary state

An independent state that concentrates power in the central government and grants little authority to the provinces.

federal state

An independent country that gives considerable powers and even autonomy to its constituent parts.



FIGURE 6.4 A boundary disappears. In Berlin, the view toward the Brandenburg Gate changed radically between 1989 and 1991, when the Berlin Wall was destroyed and Germany reunited. (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

provides the mechanism by which the various regions can perpetuate their individual characters. Power is diffused, and the central government surrenders much authority to the individual provinces. The United States, Canada, Germany, Australia, and Switzerland, though exhibiting varying degrees of federalism, provide examples. The trend in the United States has been toward a more unitary, less federal government, with fewer states' rights. By contrast, federalism remains vital in Canada, representing an effort to counteract French-Canadian demands for Québec's independence. That is, by emphasizing federalism, the central government allows more latitude for provincial self-rule, thus reducing public support for the more radical option of secession.

Whether federal or unitary, a country functions through some system of political subdivisions. In federal systems, these subdivisions sometimes overlap in authority, with confusing results. For example, the Native American reservations in the United States occupy a unique and ambiguous place in the federal system of political subdivisions. These semiautonomous enclaves are legally sanctioned political territories that, theoretically, only indigenous Americans can possess. In reality, ownership is often fragmented by non-Native American land holdings within the reservations. Although not completely sovereign, Native Americans do have certain rights to self-government that differ from those of surrounding local authorities. For example, many reservations can (and do) build casinos on their land even though gambling may be illegal in surrounding political jurisdictions. Reservations do not fit neatly into the American political system of states, counties, townships, precincts, and incorporated municipalities.

Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces Although physical factors such as the spatial organization of territory, degree of compactness, and type of boundaries can influence an independent country's stability, other forces are also at work. In particular, cultural factors often make or break a country. The most viable independent countries, those least troubled by internal discord, have a strong feeling of group solidarity among their population. Group identity is the key.

nationalism
The sense of belonging to and self-identifying with a national culture.

In the case of the modern state, the primary source of group identity is **nationalism**. Nationalism is the idea that the individual derives a significant part of his or her social identity from a sense of belonging to a nation. We can trace the origins of modern nationalism to the late eighteenth century and the emergence of the modern nation-state. Political geographer John Agnew cautions us, however, that the meaning and form of nationalism are unstable, making it difficult to generalize. One version is state nationalism, wherein the nation-state is exalted and individuals are called to sacrifice

for the good of the greater whole. The twentieth-century history of state nationalism in Europe is marked by two horrific world wars in which millions of lives were sacrificed. Referring to World War I, Agnew points out that the "war itself was also the outcome of a mentality in which the individual person had to sacrifice for the good of the greater whole: the nation-state."

When a specific ethnic group or ethnically based political party controls the state's military, we sometimes see forced deportations and even attempted genocides in efforts to create an ethnically homogeneous national citizenry (see Chapter 5). This happened most recently in Rwanda in 1994 and in the Balkans in the 1990s. The most notorious modern example is Nazi Germany's attempt in the 1930s and 1940s to clear German territory of non-Germans, especially Jews and Roma (Gypsies) (see Rod's Notebook, page 196). Another form is sub-state nationalism, in which ethnic or linguistic minority populations seek to secede from the state or to alter state territorial boundaries to promote cultural homogeneity and political autonomy.

Geographers refer to factors that promote national unity and solidarity as **centripetal forces**. By contrast, anything that disrupts internal order and furthers the break-up of the territory is called a **centrifugal force**. Many states encourage centripetal forces that help fuel nationalistic sentiment. Such things as an official national language, national history museums, national parks and monuments, and sometimes even a national religion are actively promoted and supported by the state. We consider an array of centripetal and centrifugal forces later, in the sections on globalization and nature-culture.

centripetal force

Any factor that supports the internal unity of a country.

centrifugal force

Any factor that disrupts the internal unity of a country.

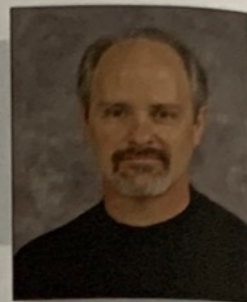
Political Boundaries in Cyberspace

What happens to political boundaries in cyberspace? E-mail, the Internet, and the World Wide Web can cross borders in ways previously not possible, although radio, telephone, and fax machines possess some of the same border-defying qualities. In Germany, for example, Nazi and neo-Nazi propaganda is prohibited, yet the First Amendment right of freedom of speech protects the dissemination of this material in the United States. What happens when this propaganda originates in the United States and is posted electronically to online bulletin boards worldwide? Can the German government prosecute the originator of the message—an American—for violating a German law?

How can countries impose their laws and boundaries in the computer age? One way is to restrict citizens' access to technological hardware such as satellite dishes, computers, phone lines, and cell phones. This is becoming

Rod's Notebook

Places of a Genocidal State



Rod Neumann



Birkenau camp in the Auschwitz complex. These chimneys are all that remain of hundreds of prisoner barracks, which once stretched for many kilometers and held a total of approximately 90,000 people. (Courtesy of Roderick Neumann.)

For years I have known of the Holocaust in broad historical outline.

I knew that 6 million Jews were systematically murdered by the Nazi-controlled German state. The ideology of the Nazi Party was a rabid form of German nationalism founded on racial hatred, especially anti-Semitism. For Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, the "final solution" to the "problem" of European Jews was their extermination. By the 1940s, Nazi Germany had become the world's first "genocidal state."

Although I had long been aware of these historical events, I had not fully grasped the nature of a genocidal state and how it functioned

until I traveled to Poland and visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Auschwitz-Birkenau is a Nazi death camp complex where 1.1 million people were murdered during World War II. The abstraction of 6 million murders was suddenly made concrete as I saw firsthand how the German state organized the collection of Jews from as far away as the Netherlands and Greece and brought them to this concentration camp in southern Poland. I saw how the rail lines were built to efficiently unload thousands of prisoners and quickly

send them to slave labor or quick death. I saw how the Birkenau camp had been built close to manufacturing facilities of German companies in order to more efficiently exploit prisoners' labor. Walking through the gas chambers where hundreds of thousands had died, I perceived the unspeakable horror of state-run mass murder.

I left Auschwitz-Birkenau thinking how important the experience of place is to knowledge. I could not have grasped fully the scale and magnitude of industrial mass genocide had I not looked out across the miles of rail lines and hundreds of hectares of barracks where people were stored until they could be murdered. I could never have understood how critical spatial relations were to the conduct of mass murder without physically moving through the spaces of the death camps.

I also came away realizing again how memory and place are so tightly bound. We memorialize places so that we do not forget. The United Nations declared Auschwitz-Birkenau a World Heritage Site in 1979 in hopes that the world will remember and prevent future atrocities. I know I will not forget my encounter with the places of a genocidal state.

Posted by Rod Neumann

increasingly difficult for even the most totalitarian regimes. Another tactic deployed by states is to allow citizens' access to the Web but to control the flow of information they receive. The most well-known example is the deal cut between the search engine company Google and the People's Republic of China in 2006. In order to gain access to

China's rapidly expanding market for Internet services estimated at 162 million customers in 2007, Google agreed to create a self-censoring search engine. Its Chinese-language version was specially designed to match the Chinese government's censorship laws. Web sites promoting ideas that the state views as threatening to its ideological

dominance, such as free speech and the practice of unauthorized religions, are filtered out by Google's search engine.

Google, based in Mountain View, California, has been widely criticized in the United States and has even been called to testify before Congress. In their own defense, Google officials argue that they can do more good for China's citizens by participating in their Internet business than by withdrawing completely. This case illustrates that political boundaries are far from irrelevant in the age of the Internet. The Internet is, to a degree, eroding political boundaries by allowing information and ideas to diffuse more rapidly and completely. As a result, political barriers to cultural diffusion have become more fragile. However, countries still have some power to control what ideas are allowed inside their territorial boundaries.

Supranational Political Bodies

In addition to independent countries and their governmental subdivisions, the third major type of political functional region is the **supranational organization** (Figure 6.5). **Supranationalism** exists when countries voluntarily give up some portion of their sovereignty to gain the advantages of a closer political, economic, and cultural association with their neighbors. Sometimes supranational organizations take the form of **regional trading blocs**,

supranational organization
A group of independent countries joined together for purposes of mutual interest.

supranationalism
A situation that occurs when states willingly relinquish some degree of sovereignty in order to gain the benefits of belonging to a larger political-economic entity.

regional trading blocs
Agreements made among geographically proximate countries that reduce trade barriers in order to better compete with other regional markets.



FIGURE 6.5 Some supranational political organizations in the Eastern Hemisphere. These organizations vary greatly in purpose and cohesion. ASEAN stands for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and its purposes are both economic and political. *What might this map indicate about globalization?*

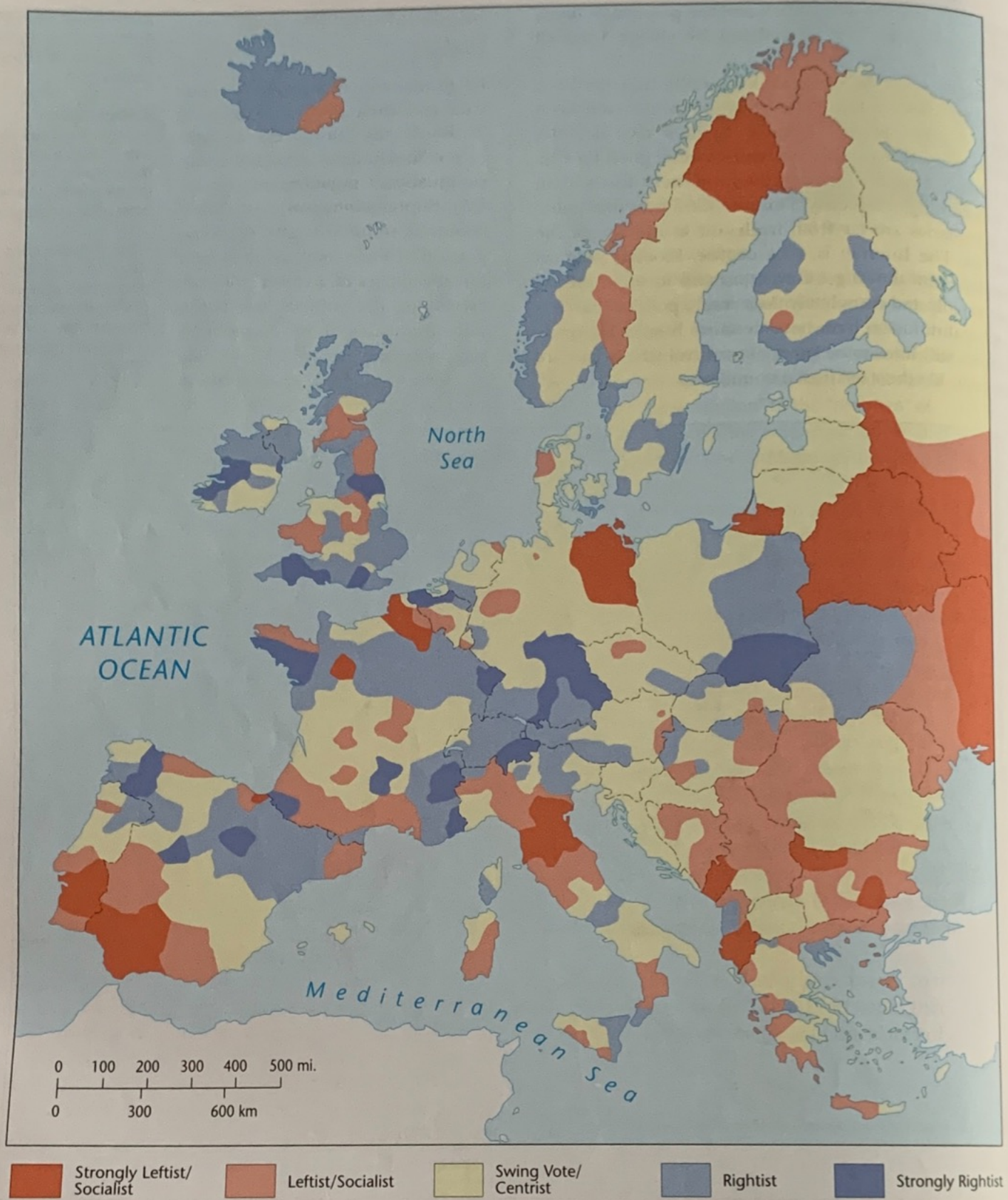


FIGURE 6.6 The electoral geography of Europe. A conservative-rightist core contrasts with a socialist-leftist periphery. Data are based on elections held in the period 1950 to 1995. In the formerly communist countries, the record of free elections began only in 1990. (Source: Jordan-Bychkov and Jordan, 2002: 226.)

such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, which comprises Canada, the United States, and Mexico), that promote the freer flow of goods and services across international borders.

In the twentieth century, supranational organizations grew in numbers and importance, coincident with and counterbalancing the proliferation of independent countries. Some represent the vestiges of collapsed empires, such as the British Commonwealth, French Community, and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)—the latter a shadow of the former Soviet Union. Most supranational organizations, such as the Arab League or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), possess little cohesion.

The European Union, or EU, is by far the most powerful, ambitious, and successful supranational organization in the world (see Figure 6.5, page 197). It grew from a central core area of six countries in the 1950s to its present membership of 27. At first, the EU was merely a customs union whose purpose was to lower or remove tariffs that hindered trade, but it gradually took on more and more of a political and cultural role. An underlying motivation was to weaken the power of its member countries to the point that they could never again wage war against one another—a response to the devastation of Europe in two world wars.

The member countries have all sacrificed some of their sovereign powers to the EU administration. A single monetary currency, the euro, has been adopted by most EU members. Most international borders within the EU are now completely open, requiring no passport checks. More importantly for citizenship and national identity, the EU is standardizing a range of social norms related to the tolerance of religious and ethnic difference, human rights, and gender relations. In effect, the EU is pushing supranationalism to its logical conclusion. That is, at some future date nationalism as a focus of identity will be obsolete and people will think of themselves as European rather than as, say, Italian, or Latvian, or Polish. We will have to wait to learn whether centripetal or centrifugal forces will win out in the EU's grand experiment.

Reflecting on Geography

What will motivate the existing and prospective member countries of the European Union to continue to sacrifice aspects of their independence to create a stronger union?

Electoral Geographical Regions

Voting in elections creates another set of political regions. A free vote of the people on some controversial issue provides one of the purest expressions of culture, revealing attitudes on religion, ethnicity, and ideology. Geographers can devise formal culture regions based on voting pat-

terns, giving rise to the subspecialty known as **electoral geography**.

Mapping voting tendencies over many decades shows deep-rooted, formal electoral behavior regions. In Europe, for example, some districts and provinces have a long record of rightist sentiment, and many of these lie toward the center of Europe. Peripheral areas, especially in the east, are often leftist strongholds (Figure 6.6). Every country where free elections are permitted has a similarly varied electoral geography. In other words, cumulative voting patterns typically reveal sharp and pronounced regional contrasts. Electoral geographers refer to these borders as cleavages.

Electoral geographers also concern themselves with functional regions, in this case the voting district or precinct. Their interests are both scholarly and practical. For example, following each census, political redistricting takes place in the United States. In redistricting, new boundaries are drawn for congressional districts to reflect the population changes since the previous census. The goal is to establish voting areas of more or less equal population and to increase or reduce the number of districts depending on the amount and direction of change in total population. These districts form the electoral basis for the U.S. House of Representatives. State legislatures are based on similar districts. Geographers often assist in the redistricting process.

The pattern of voting precincts or districts can influence election results. If redistricting remains in the hands of legislators, then the majority political group or party will often try to arrange the voting districts geographically in such a way as to maximize and perpetuate its power. Cleavage lines will be crossed to create districts that have a majority of voters favoring the party in power or some politically important ethnic group. This practice is called **gerrymandering** (Figure 6.7, page 200), and the resultant voting districts often have awkward, elongated shapes. Gerrymandering can be accomplished by one of two methods. One is to draw district boundaries so as to concentrate all of the opposition party into one district, thereby creating an unnecessarily large majority while also ensuring that it cannot win elsewhere. A second is to draw the district boundaries so as to dilute the opposition's vote so that it does not form a simple majority in any district.

electoral geography

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

gerrymandering

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

Red States, Blue States

In recent years, various commentators in academia and the popular media have used maps of national election results to suggest that the United States is divided into

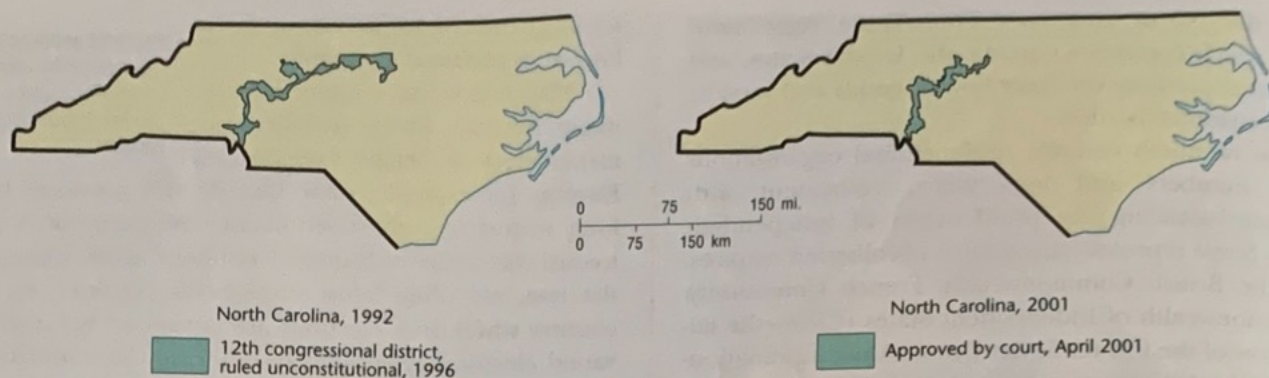


FIGURE 6.7 Gerrymandering of a congressional district in North Carolina. The North Carolina Twelfth District was created in 1992 to ensure an African-American majority so that an additional minority candidate could be elected to Congress. Note the awkward shape of these districts, often a sign of gerrymandering. In 1996, the North Carolina district and others gerrymandered for racial purposes were declared unconstitutional. The lines were redrawn, and although the district still looks very much gerrymandered, the courts approved the revised version. (Source: *New York Times*.)

distinct culture regions. We can trace this argument to the postelection analysis of the controversial 2000 presidential election, when, for the first time, news media adopted a universal color scheme for mapping voter preferences. States where the majority of voters favored the Democratic Party's presidential candidate were assigned the color blue, whereas those favoring the Republican candidate were assigned red. When cartographers mapped the state-by-state results of the 2000 and subsequently the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, the solid blocks of starkly contrasting colors gave the appearance of a deeply divided country (Figure 6.8).

The terms *red state* and *blue state* entered the popular lexicon in reference to the division of the United States into regions of "conservative" and "liberal" cultures that

these maps implied. Figure 6.8 suggests, for example, that the U.S. South is politically and culturally conservative, whereas the West Coast is liberal. These maps, so common in the popular media, are overly simplistic and, therefore, misleading. For example, the solid red coloring of a large portion of the country in Figure 6.8 implies that most of the United States is culturally and politically conservative. However, this map gives inordinate visual importance to states of larger areal extent, no matter what their population. A cartogram provides a better representation of both the true significance of states in the presidential election and the relative proportion of voters favoring Democrats or Republicans (Figure 6.9). When states' populations are

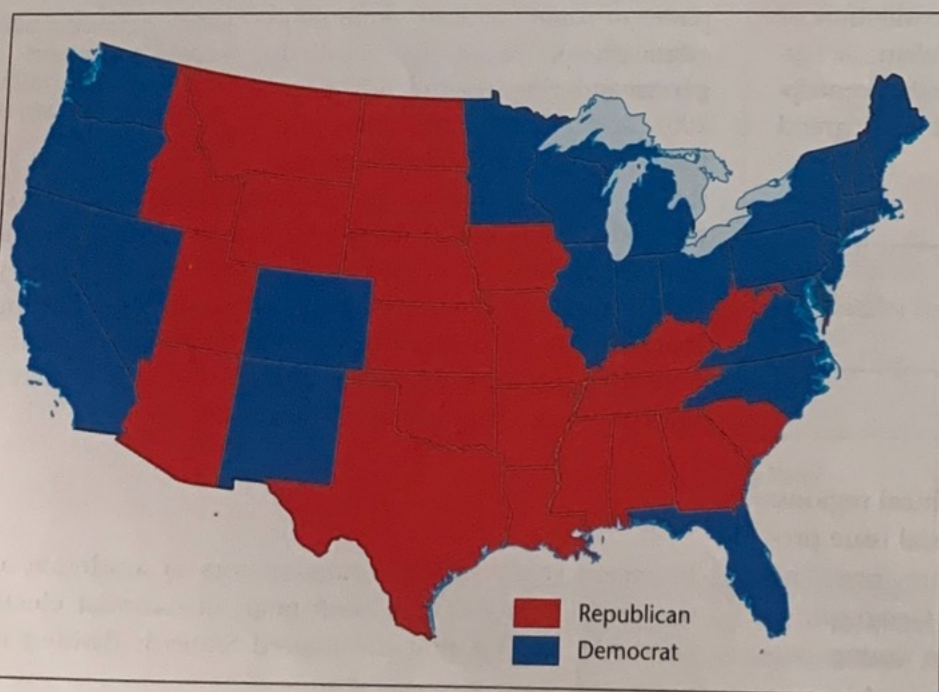


FIGURE 6.8 2008 presidential election results. News media have adopted a standard color coding for political parties—red for Republican, blue for Democrat—in election result maps. It is now common to hear of the United States being politically and culturally divided into "red state" and "blue state" regions. (Source: Courtesy of Mark Newman, <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/election/2008/>.)

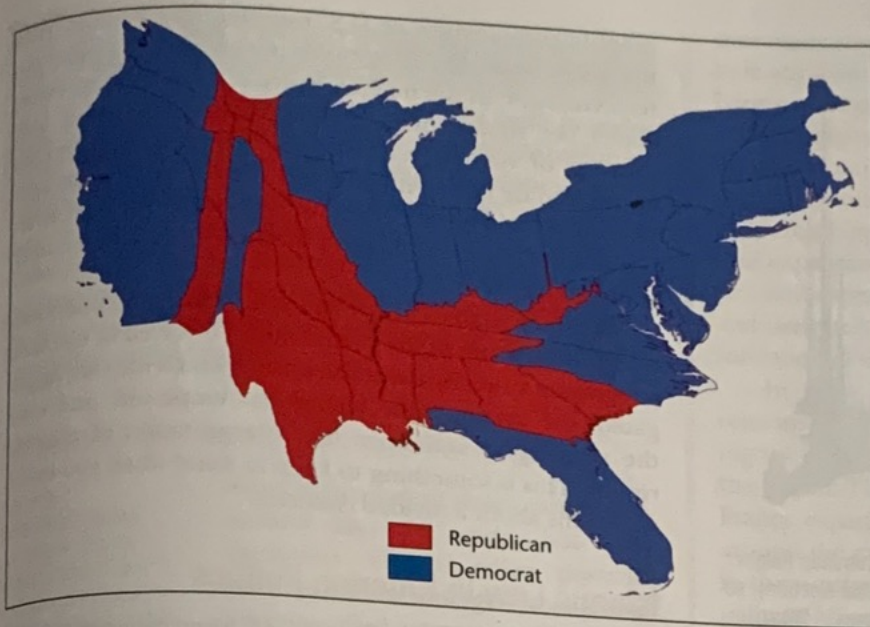


FIGURE 6.9 Cartogram of the 2008 presidential election results. This map sizes the states in proportion to their respective populations. *How does this cartogram compare to the map in Figure 6.8 in its representation of the relative popularity of the Republican and Democratic candidates?* (Source: Courtesy of Mark Newman, <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/election/2008/>.)

taken into account, U.S. voters look much more favorable toward Democratic rather than Republican candidates.

The red state/blue state designation also exaggerates the appearance of sharp geographic divisions within the country. Whether a state is designated “red” or “blue” is based on the winner-take-all system that the United States uses for presidential elections. That is, the candidate that receives a simple majority in the popular vote takes all the Electoral College votes for that state. George W. Bush, for example, defeated Al Gore in Florida by only 537 votes in 2000, but he received all 25 of the state’s electoral votes. This was an unusually close result, but it is common in

presidential elections for only a small percentage of a state’s popular vote to separate the winner and the loser. Designating a state such as Florida as “red” thus masks the narrow margin of the Republican victory and exaggerates the existence of regional polarization.

The limitations of the red state/blue state designation have led to the introduction of the term *purple state* to signify closely divided states. If we apply the purple state idea (i.e., shadings of color rather than stark contrasts) to county-level election results, we find that the simplistic division of the United States into liberal and conservative regions begins to break down (Figure 6.10). There is a

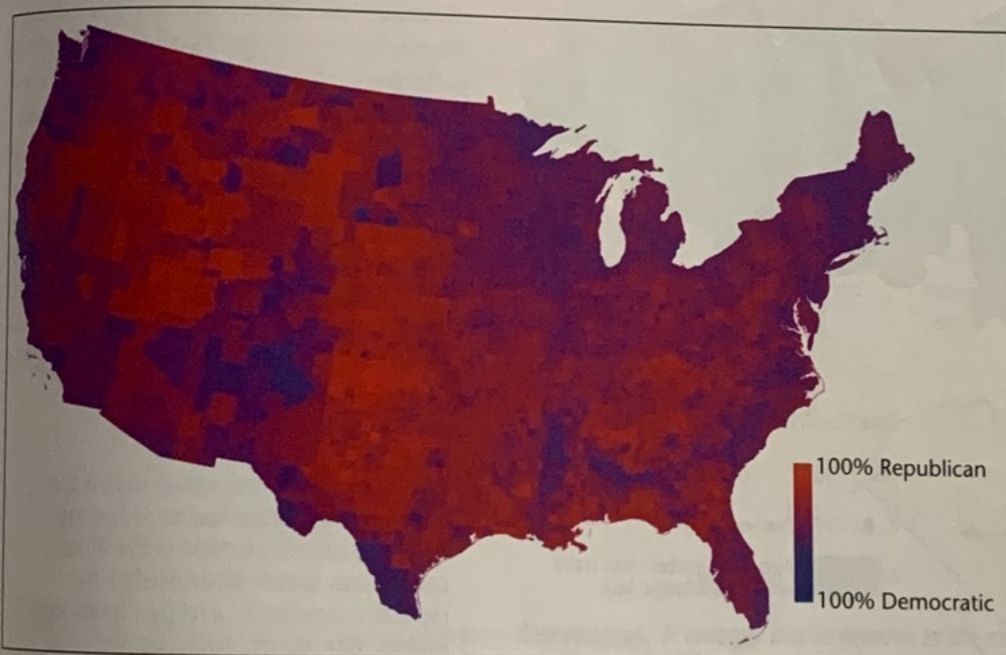


FIGURE 6.10 Purple America. Rather than using stark color contrasts to represent the 2008 presidential election results, this map uses color shading. *How does the use of shading affect our understanding of a sharply divided American electorate that appears so prominent in Figure 6.8? What other kinds of geographic voting patterns emerge?* (Source: Courtesy of Mark Newman, <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/election/2008/>.)

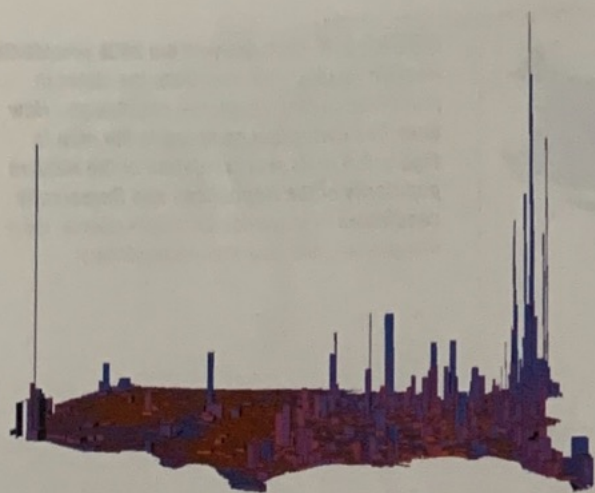


FIGURE 6.11 Presidential election results in 3-D. In this map height represents voters per square mile (for the 2004 presidential election), so urban areas stand out in contrast to suburban and rural areas. *What political-geographic patterns are noticeable here?* (Robert J. Vanderbei, Princeton University.)

great deal of county-by-county variation within states across the United States. New geographic patterns emerge in this map that belie the idea of large regional divisions in the country.

Using shades of color and county-level results—rather than using contrasting colors and state-level results—provides a very different picture of U.S. regional political and cultural differences. Even this nuanced and finely grained cartographic presentation does not reveal all of the geo-

graphic complexities of U.S. presidential elections. With three-dimensional cartographic techniques, another pattern emerges. In the map in **Figure 6.11**, height represents voters per square mile, so that volume represents total number of voters. Here the core geographic difference appears to be between cities and rural areas, not between regions. The general pattern we see is that rural areas are predominantly Republican and cities are predominantly Democratic.

A closer analysis of the red state/blue state phenomenon reveals some of the complexities involved in electoral geography. Choices about the scale at which data are aggregated, the cartographic techniques employed, and even the map colors influence the interpretation of election results. This is something to keep in mind when you evaluate claims about a divided America.

Islamic Law in Nigerian Politics

As we will see in Chapter 7, politics is often intertwined with religion. Some countries function as theocracies. In many others, internal religious divisions are expressed politically. A good example is Nigeria, which is divided between a Muslim north and a Christian/animist south (**Figure 6.12**). In recent years, all of the states of northern Nigeria added criminal law to the jurisdiction of sharia courts. Sharia is Islamic law, which is detailed in the Qur'an and has long been applied in personal and civil law in northern Nigeria, where the majority of the population is Muslim. Although Muslims welcomed the change, it has caused tensions between the Muslim majority and local non-Muslim

minorities. Non-Muslims are not tried in sharia courts, but they have complained that their political and economic marginalization has increased since the change. There has been an increase in religious violence in the northern states and even reports that some Christian populations have chosen to flee the region. It is unlikely that the country will fragment along this politico-religious divide in the near future. At the very least, this movement strengthens the centrifugal forces at work in this troubled country, which has already experienced one bloody, but unsuccessful, secessionist war.

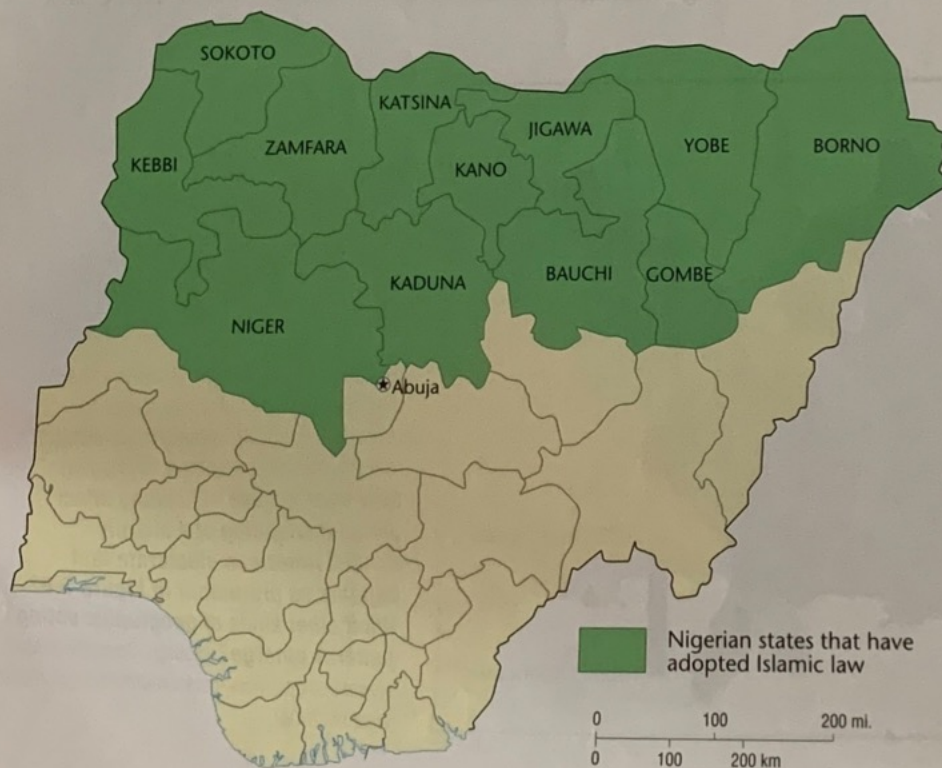


FIGURE 6.12 States within Nigeria that have adopted Islamic law as of January 1, 2002. The religious tension in this African country was already intense before the regional imposition of a religion-based legal system. *Can Nigeria hold together?*

(Source: Embassy of Nigeria, Washington, D.C.)



Mobility

Is mobility an important factor in understanding political geography? Absolutely!

Political events and developments can trigger massive human migrations, sometimes spanning continents. Moreover, the forces of globalization have accentuated the importance of mobility across political boundaries. However, political boundaries also act as barriers to the movement of people, ideas, knowledge, and resources.

Movement Between Core and Periphery

core area
The territorial nucleus from which a country grows in area and over time, often containing the national capital and the main center of commerce, culture, and industry.

Many independent states sprang fully formed into the world, but some expanded outward when powerful political entities emerged from a small nucleus called a **core area**. These core political powers enlarged their territories by annexing adjacent lands, often

over many centuries. Generally, core areas possess a particularly attractive set of resources for human life and culture. Larger numbers of people cluster there than in surrounding districts, especially if the area has some measure of natural defense against aggressive neighboring political entities. This denser population, in turn, may produce enough wealth to support a large army, which then provides the base for further expansion outward from the core area. Resources, people, and capital investment begin to flow between the core and peripheral territories, usually resulting in a further consolidation of the core's wealth and power.

In states formed in this way, the core area typically remains the country's single most important district, housing the capital city and the cultural and economic heart of the nation. The core area is the node of a functional region. France expanded to its present size from a small core area around the capital city of Paris. China grew from a nucleus in the northeast, and Russia originated in the small principality of Moscow (**Figure 6.13**). The United States grew westward from a core between Massachusetts and Virginia on the Atlantic coastal plain, an area that still has the national capital and the densest population in the country.

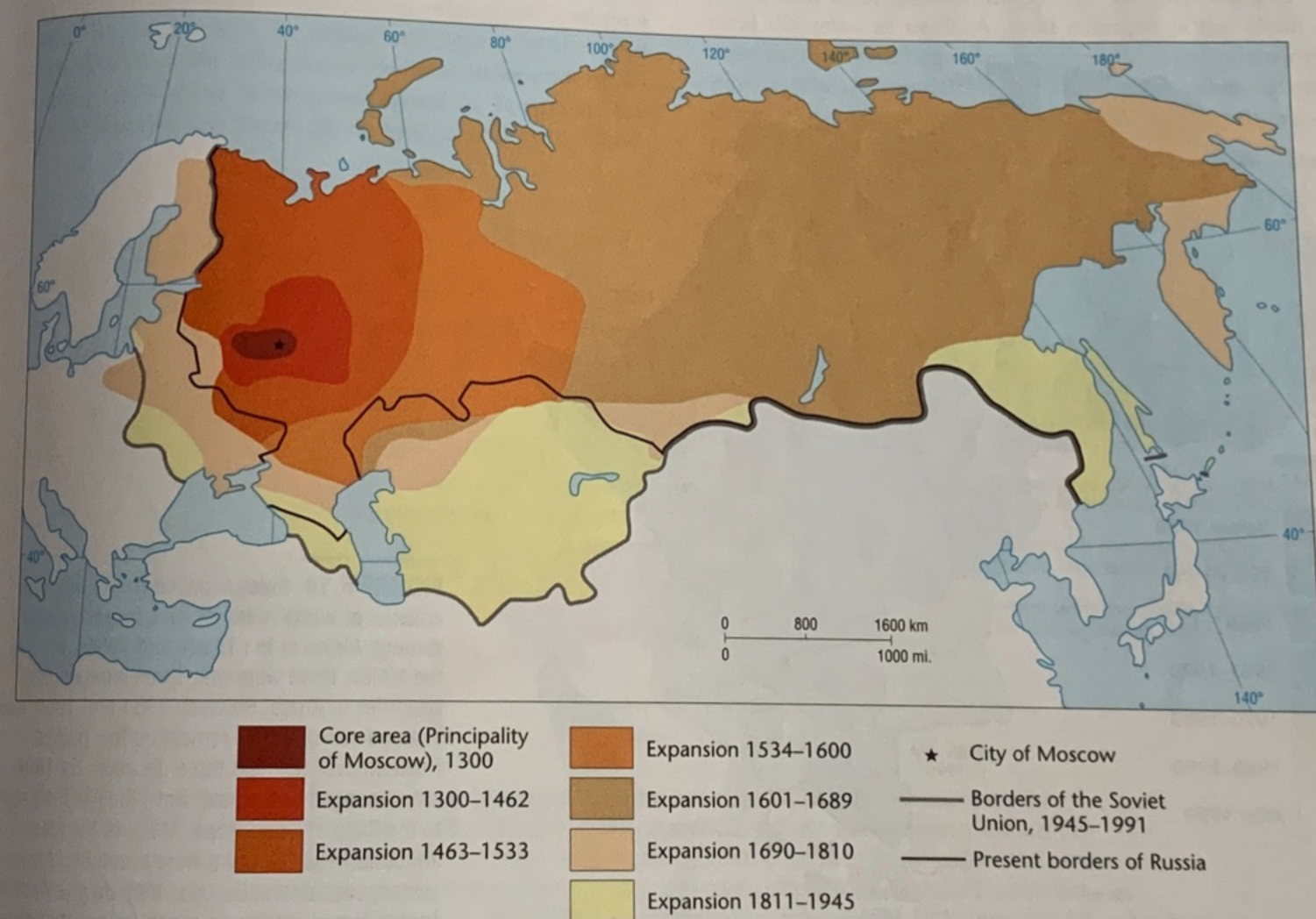


FIGURE 6.13 Russia developed from a core area. Can you think of reasons why expansion to the east was greater than expansion to the west? What environmental goals might have motivated Russian expansion?

The evolution of independent countries in this manner produces the core-periphery configuration, described in Chapter 1 as typical of both functional and formal regions. Although the core dominates the periphery, a certain amount of friction exists between the two. Peripheral areas generally display pronounced, self-conscious regionalism and occasionally provide the settings for secession movements. Even so, countries that diffused from core areas are, as a rule, more stable than those created all at once to fill a political void. The absence of a core area can blur or weaken citizens' national identity and make it easier for various provinces to develop strong local or even foreign allegiances. Belgium and the Democratic Republic of the Congo offer examples of countries without political core areas. In the case of the Congo, this situation partly accounts for the history of secessionist conflicts and internecine wars since the country gained independence from colonial rule in 1960.

Countries with multiple, competing core areas are potentially the least stable of all. This situation often develops when two or more independent countries are united. The main threat is that one of the competing cores will

form the center of a separatist movement and break apart the country. In Spain, Castile and Aragon united in 1479, but tensions in the union remain more than five centuries later—in part because the old core areas of the two former countries, represented by the cities of Madrid and Barcelona, continue to compete for political control and cultural influence. That these two cities symbolize two language-based cultures, Castilian and Catalan, compounds the division.

Mobility, Diffusion, and Political Innovation

One of the consequences of colonialism was the creation of new patterns of mobility among the conquered populations. One pattern in particular contained the seeds of colonialism's demise. Colonial rule in Africa depended on the establishment of a relatively small cadre of educated African civil servants. The colonial rulers selected those whom they considered the best and the brightest (and most politically cooperative) among their African subjects and sent them to the best universities in Europe. In addition to learning the skills required of colonial functionaries,

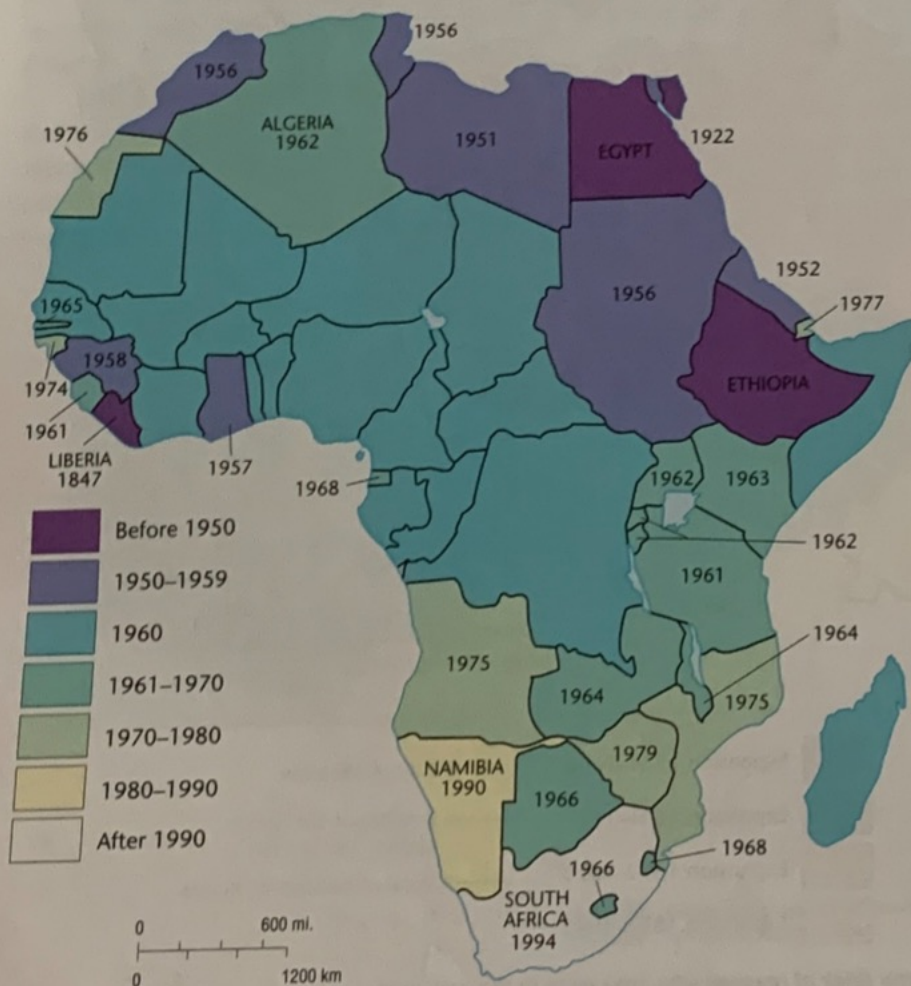


FIGURE 6.14 Independence from European colonial or white minority rule spread rapidly through Africa in the 1950s and 1960s. Prior to the 1950s, there were only three independent countries in Africa. Between 1951 and 1968, most attained self-rule. The remaining few gained freedom over the next three decades. By 1994, independence had spread from the Mediterranean to the Cape of Good Hope. Many of the ideas about national liberation were spread by African leaders educated in Europe. *Why do you think it took a few countries so much longer than most to gain independence?*

they absorbed the ideals of Western political philosophy, such as the right of self-determination, independent self-rule, and individual rights. Educated Africans returned to their countries armed with these ideas and organized new nationalist movements to oppose colonial rule.

The consequences can be seen in the spread of political independence in Africa. In 1914, only two African countries—Liberia and Ethiopia—were fully independent of European colonial or white minority rule, and even Ethiopia later fell temporarily under Italian control. Influenced by developments in India and Pakistan, the Arabs of North Africa began a movement for independence. Their movement gained momentum in the 1950s and swept southward across most of the African continent between 1960 and 1965. Many of Africa's great nationalist leaders of this period had obtained university degrees in England, Scotland, France, and other European countries. By 1994, African nationalists had helped spread the idea of independence into all remaining parts of the continent, eventually reaching the Republic of South Africa, formerly under white minority rule (Figure 6.14).

Despite its rapid spread, diffusion of African self-rule occasionally encountered barriers. Portugal, for example, clung tenaciously to its African colonies until 1975, when a change in government in Lisbon reversed a 500-year-old policy, allowing the colonies to become independent. In colonies containing large populations of European settlers, independence came slowly and usually with blood-

shed. France, for example, sought to hold on to Algeria because many European colonists had settled there. The country nonetheless achieved independence in 1962, but only after years of violence. In Zimbabwe, a large population of European settlers refused London's orders to move toward majority rule, resulting in a bloody civil war and delaying the country's independence until 1979.

On a quite different scale, political innovations also spread within independent countries. American politics abounds with examples of cultural diffusion. A classic case is the spread of suffrage for women, a movement that culminated in 1920 with the ratification of a constitutional amendment (Figure 6.15). Opposition to women's suffrage was strongest in the U.S. South, a region that later exhibited the greatest resistance to ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and displayed the most reluctance to elect women to public office.

Federal statutes permit, to some degree, laws to be adopted in the individual functional subdivisions. In the United States and Canada, for example, each state and province enjoys broad lawmaking powers, vested in the legislative bodies of these subdivisions. The result is often a patchwork legal pattern that reveals the processes of cultural diffusion at work. A good example is the clean air movement, which began in California with the initiation of state legislation regulating automotive and industrial emissions. It later spread to other states and provided the model for clean air legislation at the federal level.

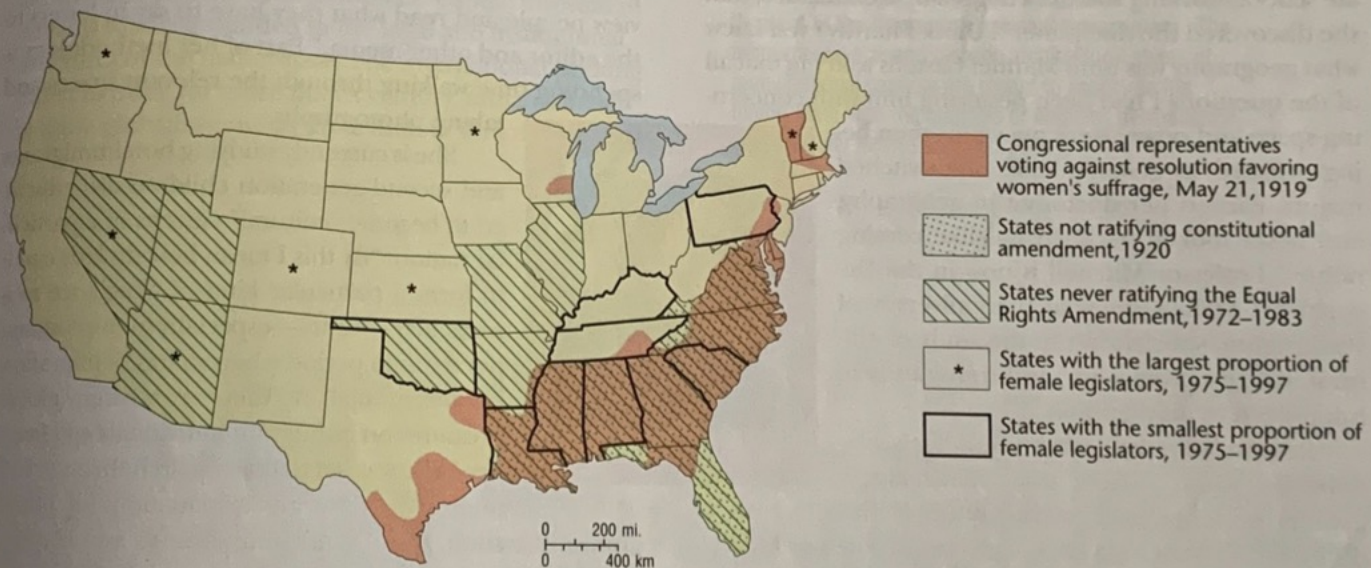


FIGURE 6.15 The diffusion of suffrage for women in the United States and of the Equal Rights Amendment. The suffrage movement achieved victory through a constitutional amendment in 1920. Both the suffrage movement and the campaign for an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) for women failed to gain approval in the Deep South, an area that also lags behind most of the remainder of the country in the election of women to public office. **What might be the barriers to diffusion in the Deep South?** The states failing to ratify the ERA lay mostly in the same area. The ERA movement did not succeed, in contrast to the earlier suffrage movement. (Adapted in part from Paulin and Wright, 1932.)

Politics and Migration

Very often political events provide the motivation for migration, both voluntary and forced. An excellent example is provided by the breakup of the Soviet Union into 15 independent countries in 1991. During the long period of Soviet unity, the country's various national groups migrated into one another's territories in large numbers. Ethnic Russians, for instance, settled in all parts of the Soviet Union, even though only one of the 15 constituent republics was Russian by identity. Likewise, many members of the other 14 major ethnic groups had relocated outside their republics.

When the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, a profound reverse migration set in almost immediately. Ethnic Russians returned to Russia, Estonians to Estonia, Azeris to Azerbaijan, and so on. By 1995, about 2 million ethnic Russians had migrated to Russia. Fully half a million of these came from recently independent Kazakhstan in central Asia. In that same period, 150,000 ethnic Kazakhs returned to Kazakhstan from Russia and other former Soviet republics. This process continues to the present day. (For other results of migration, see Practicing Geography.)

PRACTICING GEOGRAPHY

Professor Katharyne Mitchell spent her undergraduate years studying literature, music, and art, all but oblivious to the discipline of geography. It was not until graduate school, working toward a degree in architecture, that she discovered the discipline. "I think I hardly even knew what geography was until Manuel Castells told me that all of the questions I had been pestering him with concerning space and power were questions then being pursued by geographers." She switched majors, earned her doctorate in geography, and never looked back. "It was like coming home." Professor Mitchell is now in the Department of Geography at the University of Washington, specializing in the study of cultural identity, citizenship, and transnationalism related to immigration.

Research for her sometimes "feels like detective work," where one painstakingly gathers evidence and "suddenly all of the different kinds of data click together." Professor Mitchell is convinced that "the more types of methods one can bring to bear on answering a research question, the better." If, on the one hand, she is addressing macroeconomic and political questions, she concentrates on examining statistics and quantitative data of various kinds. If, on the other hand, the questions are cultural and



Globalization

How does globalization affect the world of states? The effects of globalization are complex. On the one hand, the idea of national self-determination

continues to spread with the increase in global communications. Thus, new states appear on the world map almost annually. On the other hand, the forces of globalization may be rendering some functions of the territorial state obsolete. As we will learn in this section, a great deal of speculation exists regarding the impact of globalization on political geography (see Subject to Debate).

The Nation-State

The link between political and cultural patterns is epitomized by the **nation-state**, created when a nation—a people of common heritage, memories, myths, homeland, and culture; speaking the same language;

nation-state

An independent country dominated by a relatively homogeneous culture group.

social, her methods are more qualitative. "I examine newspapers, photographs, flyers, advertisements, journals, postcards, and other documents from the time period I'm analyzing," she explains, "and I always interview people and read what they have to say in letters to the editor and other media." Part of her methodology is spending time walking through the relevant spaces and taking photographs.

She is currently studying how immigrants and second-generation children are educated to become "cultural" citizens of a particular nation. "By this I mean how do kids come to form a particular kind of allegiance to a particular country—especially in the contemporary time period when so much migration is transnational and there are so many global pressures on immigrant individuals and families." She was led to this research through her interest in differing explanations of immigrant integration, from multiculturalism to assimilation. One of the ways through which she approaches the question is to focus on national education systems. According to Professor Mitchell, national systems of education are important sites "in which to study the ways in which individuals are constituted or 'made' into certain kinds of national subjects or 'citizens.'"



(Courtesy of Katharyne Mitchell.)

Katharyne Mitchell



Subject to Debate

Whither the Nation-State?

Globalization presents powerful new challenges to the nation-state's dominant position in political geography. Undeniably, globalization has redefined the nation-state's role in regulating cultural, economic, and political life within its territorial boundaries. For instance, some scholars suggest that the increasing mobility of people on a global scale means that the ideal of a culturally homogeneous national identity is less and less attainable. In the economic sphere, production, trade, and finance are organized through transnational networks that operate as if national borders did not exist. Politically, the power of the nation-state is weakened by the rise of global institutions, such as the World Trade Organization, that have the power to penalize countries through trade sanctions.

There is, however, counterevidence suggesting that the nation-state is stronger than ever under globalization. In response to the greater transnational mobility of people, nationalist opposition has grown through so-called nativist movements that seek to staunch the flow of immigrants at their countries' borders. Although finance and trade operate through global networks, transnational flows remain constrained and directed by the laws and policies of nation-states. Capital investment remains solidly grounded in the legal and institutional structures of the nation-state. The international pecking order, in place for more than a century, remains intact because globalization has done little to shift the structural

inequalities among nation-states. Clearly globalization's implications for the continued supremacy of the nation-state are complex and unresolved.

Continuing the Debate

Based on the discussion above, consider these questions:

- Is globalization a new phenomenon operating independently of the nation-state, or is it a set of processes structured by an underlying foundation of sovereign countries?
- Are the territorial barriers erected by nation-states being dissolved or reinforced by globalization?
- Under what circumstances and because of what cultural, economic, or political phenomenon might globalization strengthen or weaken nation-states?
- Is a major reorganization of the world's political geography still unfolding, with the consequences of globalization yet to be fully evident?
- What new forms of political-geographic organization might emerge to supplant the territorial nation-state?

The Hungarian parliament building, built in 1904, is the seat of the Hungarian national government. The monumental size and historic architectural styles of many national capitols are meant to associate the nation-state with the qualities of stability, permanence, and antiquity (MIVA Stock/eStock Photo.)



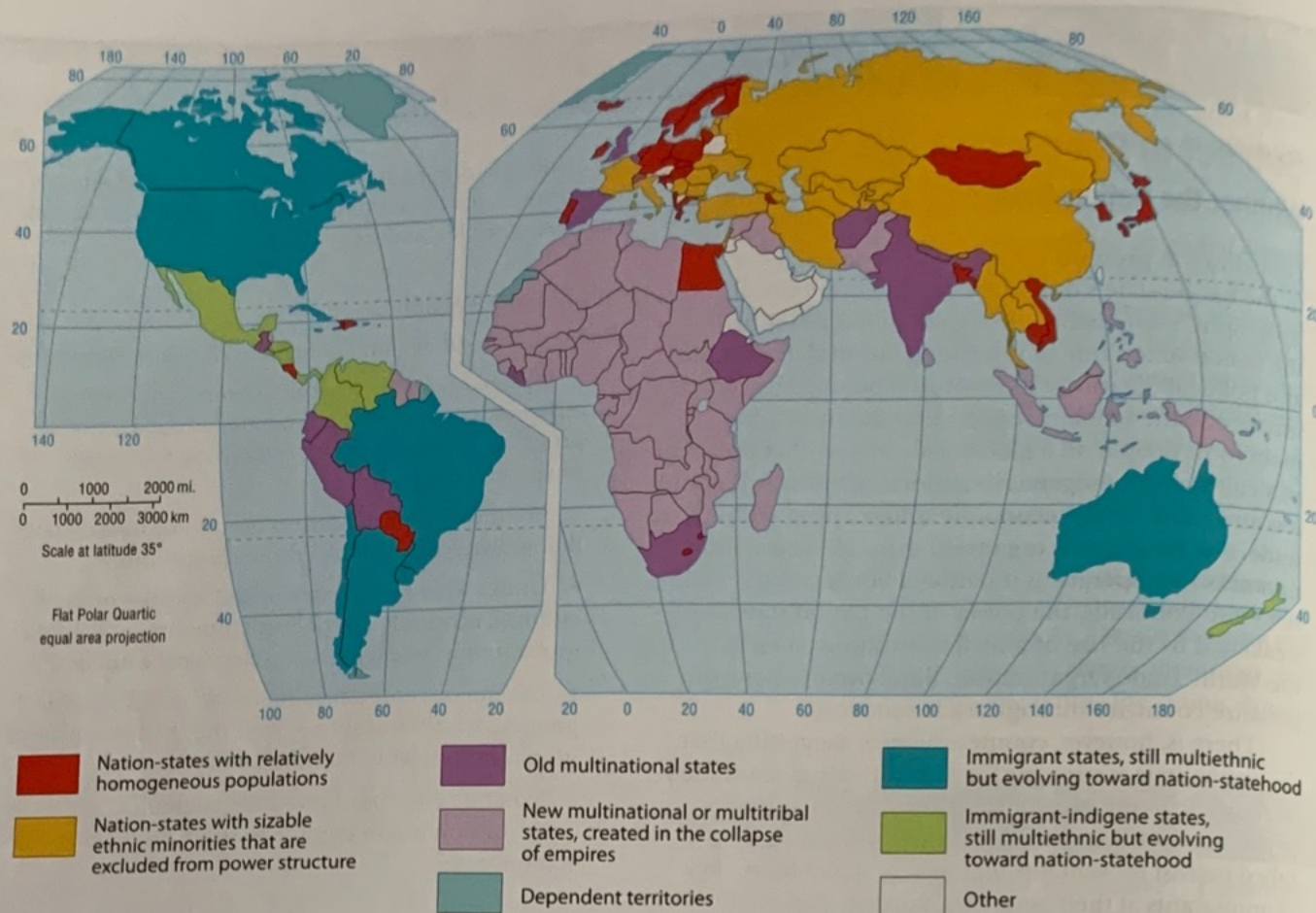


FIGURE 6.16 Nation-states, multinational countries, and other types. This classification, as is true of all classifications, is arbitrary and debatable. *How would you change it, and why?*

and/or sharing a particular religious faith—achieves independence as a separate country. Nationality is culturally based in the nation-state, and the country's *raison d'être* lies in that cultural identity. The more the people have in common culturally, the more stable and potent is the resultant nationalism. Examples of modern nation-states include Germany, Sweden, Japan, Greece, Armenia, and Finland (Figure 6.16).

Scholars generally trace the nation-state model to Europe and the European settler colonies in the Americas of the late eighteenth century. Political philosophers of the time argued that self-determination—the freedom to rule one's own country—was a fundamental right of all peoples. The ideal of self-determination spread, and over the course of the nineteenth century, a globalized system of nearly 100 nation-states emerged. Many of these nation-states, such as Portugal, Holland, and France, ruled overseas territories as colonies of the mother country. Under the European Empire, self-determination did not apply to colonies. However, the United Nations incorporated the principle of national self-determination into its charter in 1945. This

principle was adopted by independence movements in European colonies around the globe and led ultimately to decolonization.

The Condition of Transnationality

Transnationalism and *transnationality* are terms that are increasingly being heard in the halls of academia as well as in popular media. Among other things, these terms suggest that the processes of globalization are raising new questions about cultural identities. Nationality and ethnicity may continue to be important in an era of globalization, but what should one make of the increasing number of people who live, work, and play in a way that is neither rooted in a tightly knit ethnic community nor territorially grounded in the traditional nation-state? What sorts of cultural identities do these people create and defend? Is a culture of transnationalism emerging?

Geographer Katharyne Mitchell (see *Practicing Geography*, page 206) suggests that we might think about some of the cultural implications of globalization in terms of a

"condition of transnationality." She points out that the restructuring of the world economy caused by globalization has produced a great increase in the movement of people across borders. One of the key ways in which this movement differs from other historical migrations is that it tends not to be unidirectional and permanent. With the aid of new transportation and communications technologies, people are able to maintain social networks and physically move about in ways that transcend political boundaries. The experience of cultural "in-betweenness"—of living in and being linked to multiple places around the globe, while being rooted in no single place—has become fundamental to the identity of a growing group of people.

Mitchell's study of Hong Kong Chinese immigrants in Vancouver, British Columbia, illustrates the idea of transnationalism. In the 1980s, the Canadian government created a new category of immigration designed to attract business investment. Immigrants entering the country under this law had to establish businesses based in Canada. The main immigrants taking advantage of this law were Hong Kong Chinese businesspeople leaving the colony in anticipation of its handover to the People's Republic of China.

As it happened, these immigrants maintained business and social ties in both Hong Kong and Canada, moving

freely and frequently between them. In the process, a whole set of cultural conflicts were ignited between long-time Vancouver residents and the transnational Chinese. Neighborhoods were transformed as the transnationals attempted to establish themselves economically and culturally. They rapidly bought up real estate, demolished old houses, built houses in uncharacteristic architectural styles, and redesigned residential landscaping. Their mobility—a culturally defining characteristic of transnationals—made them appear transient and rootless in the eyes of longer-term residents and weakened the legitimacy of their claims and practices. This case shows us that the cultural aspects of transnationalism are bound up with the economic and political processes of globalization.

Ethnic Separatism

Many independent countries—the large majority, in fact—are not nation-states but instead contain multiple national, ethnic, and religious groups within their boundaries. India, Spain, and South Africa provide examples of older multiethnic countries. **Figure 6.17** illustrates this point by dividing up South Africa linguistically. Many, though not all, multiethnic countries came into being in the second half of the twentieth

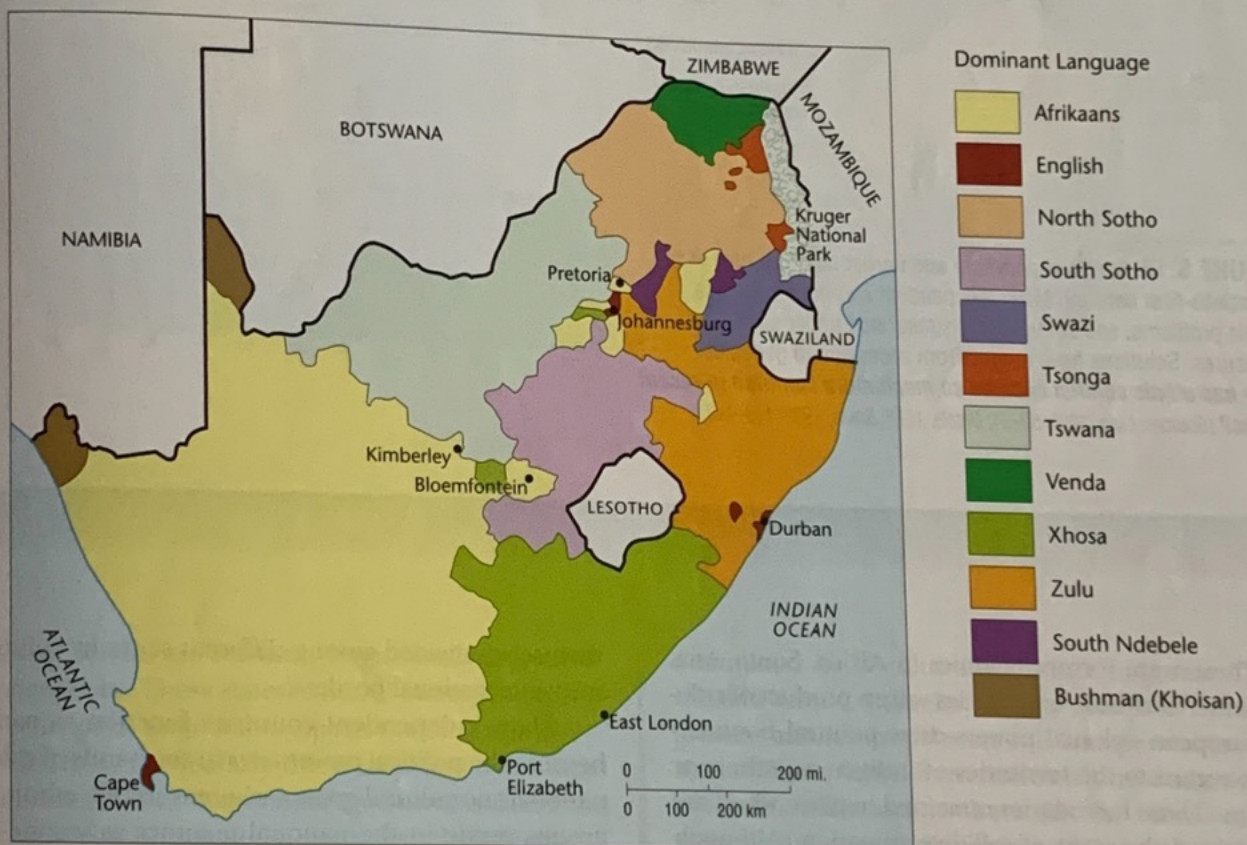


FIGURE 6.17 Languages of the Republic of South Africa, a multinational state. The mixture includes ten native tribal tongues and two languages introduced by settlers from Europe.

Ethnic Separation

- Attempted genocide
- × Ethnic cleansing
- Successful ethnic secession
- + Ongoing ethnic violence or strife
- Largely nonviolent ethnic unrest
- ⊙ Ethnic autonomy achieved

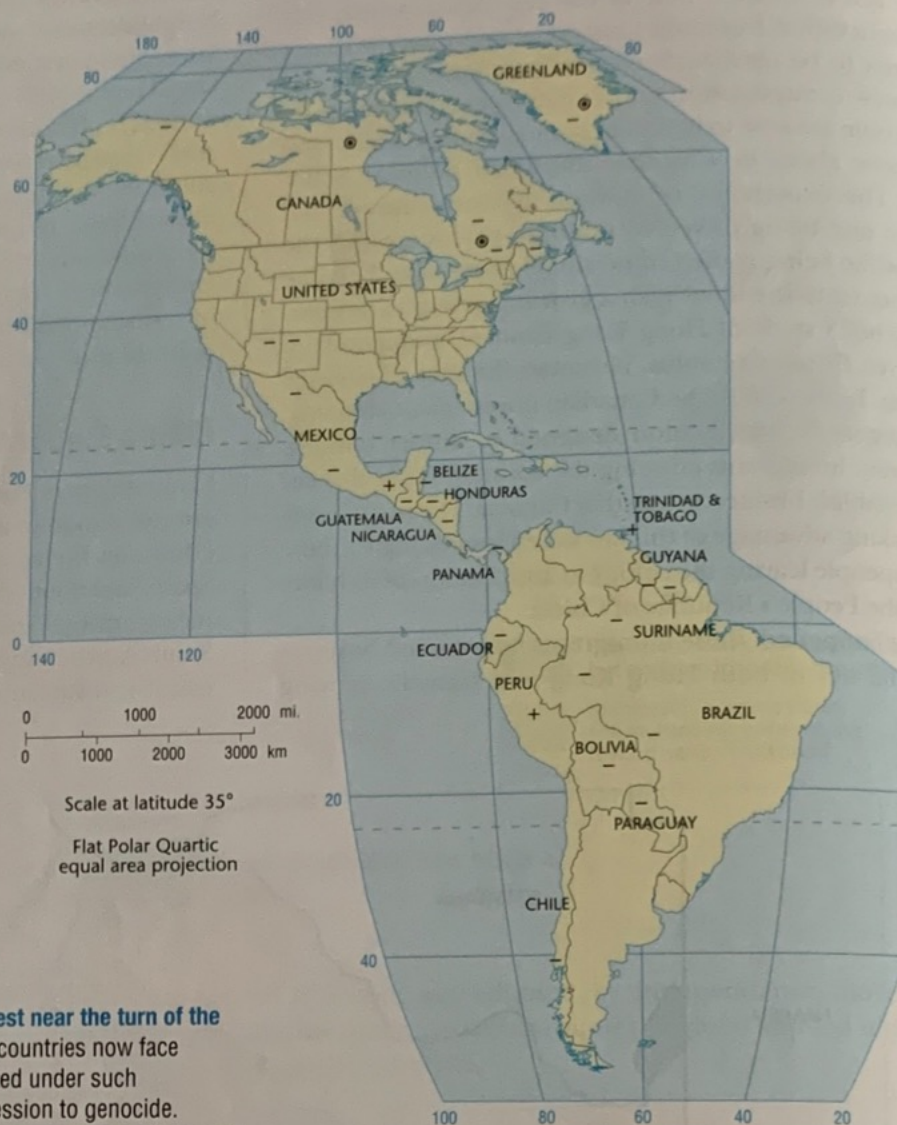
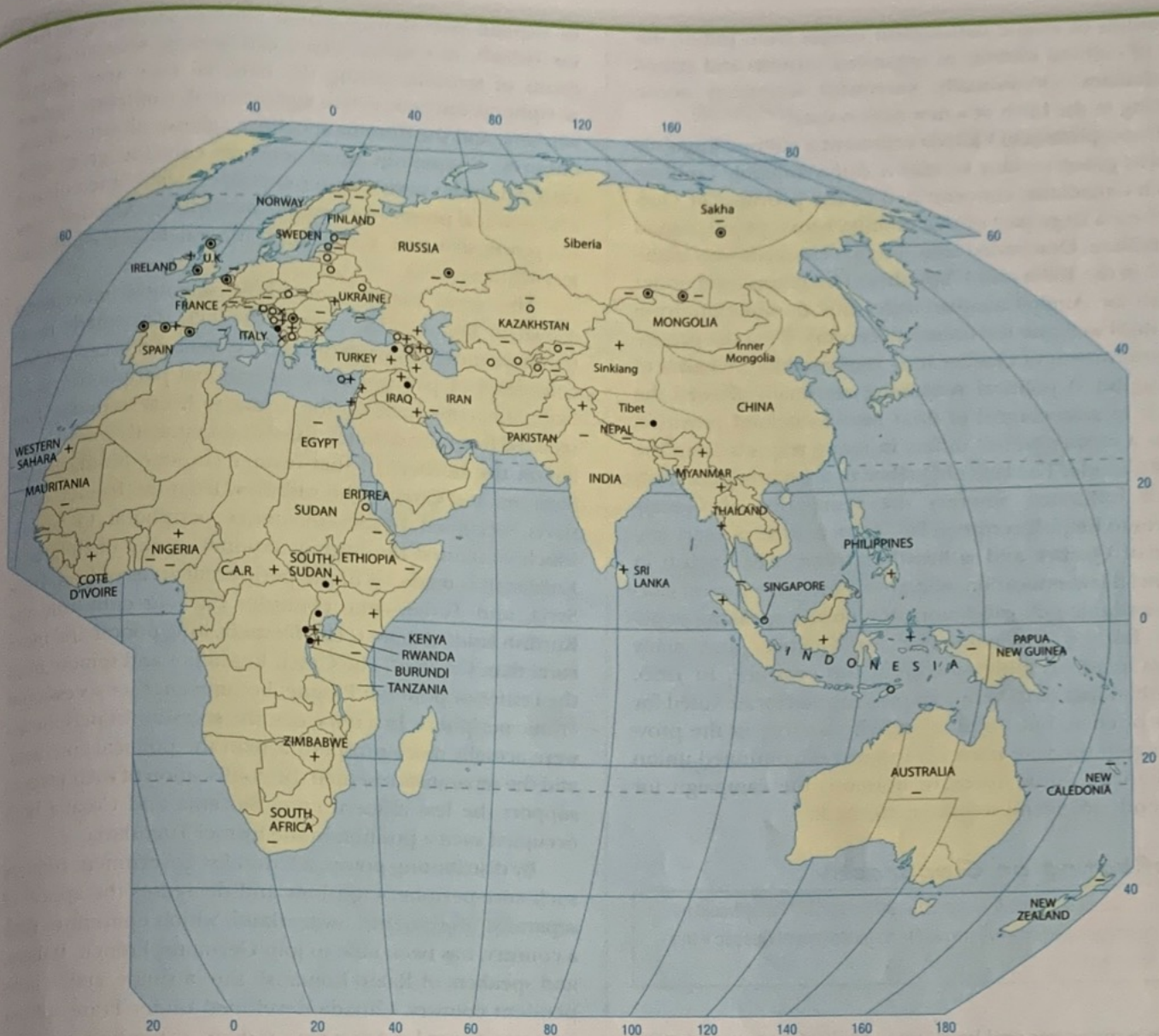


FIGURE 6.18 Ethnic separatism and unrest near the turn of the twentieth-first century. Many independent countries now face ethnic problems, and some have disintegrated under such pressures. Solutions have ranged from secession to genocide. *Why has ethnic conflict become so much more common in recent times?* (Sources: Lean, 1990: 50–51; Oldale, 1990; Smith, 1992: 140–142.)

century. These were former colonies in Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia whose boundaries were a product of colonialism. European colonial powers drew political boundaries without regard to the territories of indigenous ethnic or tribal groups. These boundaries remained in place when the countries gained the right of self-determination. Although these states are often culturally diverse, they are sometimes plagued by internal ethnic conflict. What's more, members of a single, territorially homogeneous ethnic group may find

themselves divided among different states by culturally arbitrary international borders.

Many independent countries function as nation-states because the political power rests in the hands of a dominant, nationalistic cultural group, whereas sizable ethnic minority groups reside in the national territory as second-class citizens. This creates a centrifugal force, disrupting the country's unity. Many of the newest nation-states carved out of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, such as Estonia,



Armenia, and Serbia, are relatively linguistically and ethnically homogeneous. These states' cultural homogeneity represents a centripetal force that supports national unity.

Globalization, particularly the establishment of rapid global communications, has encouraged once-isolated and voiceless minority populations to appeal their rights of autonomy and self-determination to the global community beyond their nation-state borders. Ethnic groups and indigenous peoples are cultural minorities living in a state

dominated by a culturally distinct majority. Those who inhabit ethnic homelands (see Chapter 5) often seek greater autonomy or even full independence as nation-states (**Figure 6.18**). Even some old and traditionally stable multinational countries have felt the effects of separatist movements, including Canada and the United Kingdom. Certain other countries discarded the unitary form of government and adopted an ethnic-based federalism, in hopes of preserving the territorial boundaries of the state. The

expression of ethnic nationalism ranges from public displays of cultural identity to organized protests and armed insurgencies. Occasionally, successful secessions occur, resulting in the birth of a new nation-state.

Francophones in Canada represent a cultural-linguistic minority group seeking secession. Approximately 7 million French-Canadians, concentrated in the province of Québec, form a large part of that country's total population of 31.6 million. Descended from French colonists who immigrated in the 1600s and 1700s, these Canadians lived under English or Anglo-Canadian rule and domination from 1760 until well into the twentieth century. Even the provincial government of Québec long remained in the hands of the English. A political awakening eventually allowed the French to gain control of their own homeland province, and as a result Québec differs in many respects from the rest of Canada. The laws of Québec retain a predominantly French influence, whereas the remainder of Canada adheres to English common law. French is the primary language of Québec and is heavily favored over English in provincial law, education, and government. In several elections, a sizable minority among the French-speaking population favored independence for Québec, and many Anglo-Canadians emigrated from the province. In 1995, more than half of the French-speaking electorate voted for independence, but the non-French minority in the province tipped the vote narrowly in favor of continued union with Canada. More recently, however, the campaign for independence seems to have weakened.

Reflecting on Geography

Should Canada split into two independent countries? What would be the advantages and disadvantages for an independent Québec if this split occurred?

On a more general level, one result of unrest and separatist desires is that the international political map reflects a strong linguistic-religious character. Nevertheless, the distribution of cultural groups is so confoundingly complicated and peoples are so thoroughly mixed in many regions that ethnographic political boundaries can rarely be drawn to everybody's satisfaction.

cleavage model

A political-geographic model suggesting that persistent regional patterns in voting behavior, sometimes leading to separatism, can usually be explained in terms of tensions pitting urban against rural, core against periphery, capitalists against workers, and power group against minority culture.

The Cleavage Model

Why do so many cultural minorities seek political autonomy or independence? The **cleavage model**, originally developed by Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan to explain voting patterns in electoral geography, sheds light on this phenomenon. It proposes

to explain persistent regional patterns in voting behavior (which, in extreme cases, can presage separatism) in terms of tensions pitting the national core area against peripheral districts, urban against rural, capitalists against workers, and the dominant culture against minority ethnic cultures. Frequently, these tensions coincide geographically: an urban core area monopolizes wealth and cultural and political power while ethnic minorities, excluded from the power structure, reside in peripheral, largely rural, and less affluent areas.

The great majority of ethnic separatist movements shown in Figure 6.18 (pages 210–211), particularly those that have moved beyond unrest to violence or secession, are comprised of peoples living in national peripheries, away from the core area of the country. Every republic that seceded from the defunct, Russian-dominated Soviet Union lay on the borders of that former country. Similarly, the Slovenes and Croats, who withdrew from the former Yugoslavia, occupied border territories peripheral to Serbia, which contained the former national capital of Belgrade. Kurdistan is made up of the peripheral areas of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey—the countries that currently rule the Kurdish lands (Figure 6.19). Slovakia, long poorer and more rural than Czechia (The Czech Republic) and remote from the center of power at Prague, became another secessionist ethnic periphery. In a few cases, the secessionist peripheries were actually more prosperous than the political core area, and the separatists resented the confiscation of their taxes to support the less affluent core. Slovenia and Croatia both occupied such a position in the former Yugoslavia.

By distributing power, a federalist government reduces such core-periphery tensions and decreases the appeal of separatist movements. Switzerland, which epitomizes such a country, has been able to join Germans, French, Italians, and speakers of Raeto-Romansh into a single, stable independent country. Canada developed under Francophone pressure toward a Swiss-type system, extending considerable self-rule privileges even to the Inuit and Native American groups of the north. Russia, too, has adopted a more federalist structure to accommodate the demands of ethnic minorities, and 31 ethnic republics within Russia have achieved considerable autonomy. One of these, Chechnya (called Ichkeria by its inhabitants), has been fighting for independence.

An Example: The Sakha Republic

The Sakha Republic (also called Yakutia), in the huge Russian province of Siberia, provides a useful example of rising ethnic demands (Figure 6.20, page 214). The peripheral republic is enormous, forming one-fifth of Russia's land area, and is two and a half times the size of Alaska. Roughly 35 percent of its population of 1 million consists of ethnic



FIGURE 6.19 Kurdistan. This mountainous homeland of the Kurds now lies divided among several countries. The Kurds, numbering 25 million, have lived in this region for millennia. They seek independence and have waged guerrilla war against Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, but, so far, independence has eluded them. **What might cause so large and populous a nation to fail to achieve independence?** (Source: Office of the Geographer, U.S. Department of State.)

Sakha, or Yakuts, a people of Turkic origin (see Chapter 4). Russians, who outnumber the Sakha in the republic, are concentrated in 10 urban areas, whereas the Sakha are dominant in the rural/small-town core of the republic.

The demands of the Sakha led to a declaration of “state sovereignty” in 1990. The republic now has its own elected

president and parliament, a flag and coat of arms, and a constitution (Figure 6.21, page 215). It has attained some measure of economic independence from Russia, especially with regard to authority over mineral rights. The republic can also prohibit nuclear testing on its territory. A survey in 1995 revealed that 72 percent of all ethnic Yakuts

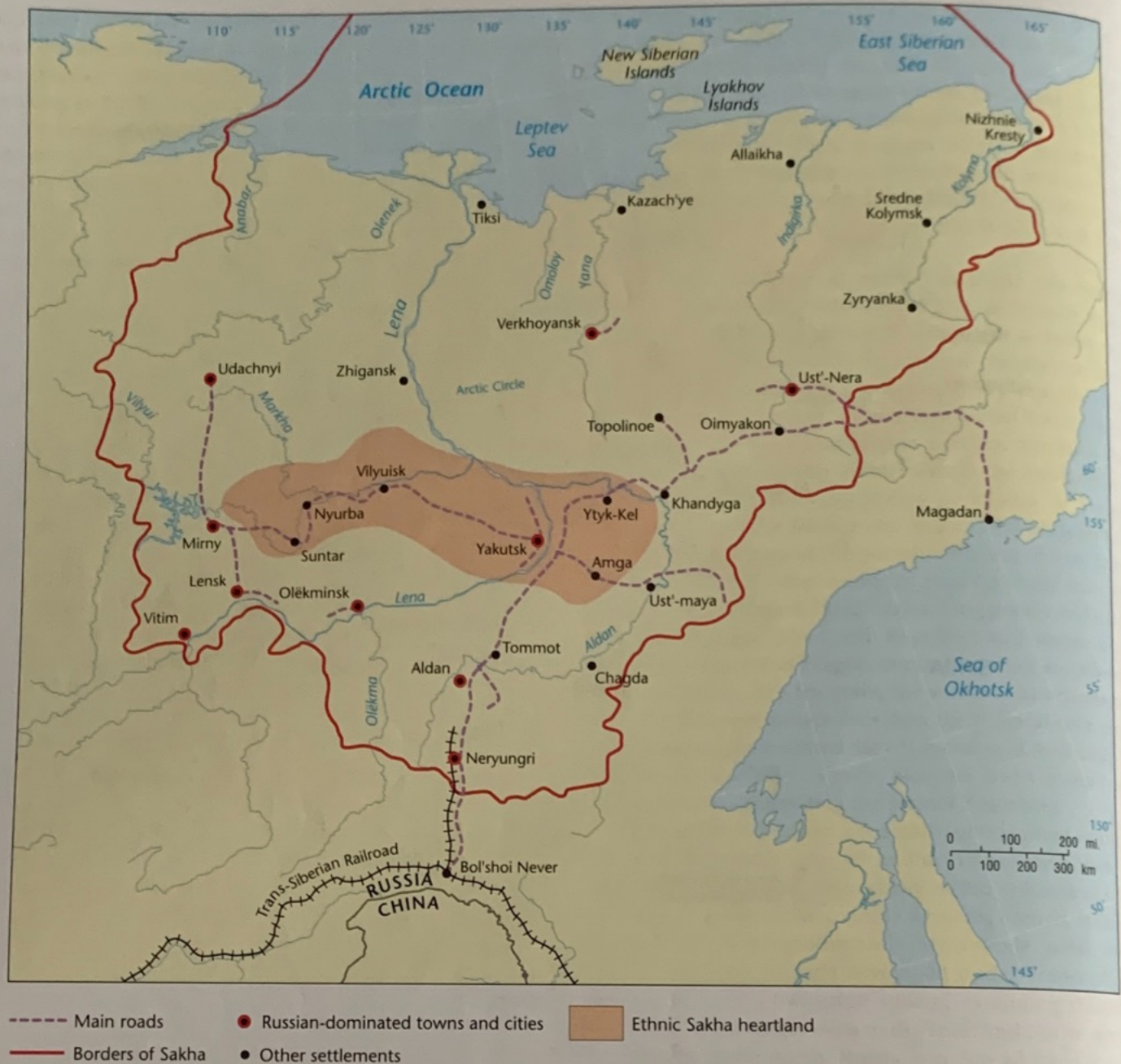


FIGURE 6.20 The Republic of Sakha, a part of Russia, has achieved considerable autonomy as a result of ethnic considerations. For its location in Russia, see Figure 6.18 (page 211). *What would hinder the republic if it sought full independence?* (Source: Jordan and Jordan-Bychkov, 2001: 4.)

felt more loyalty to Sakha than to Russia. Surprisingly, a third of all Russians living in the republic expressed this same loyalty.

The Sakha Republic does not seek independence from Russia. Still, its autonomy represents the embryo of a country. Ongoing Russian emigration from Sakha further complicates the matter. It is increasingly difficult, here as elsewhere in the modern world, to determine exactly what

an independent country is. *Sovereignty* is a political term whose meaning has become blurred.

Political Imprint on Economic Geography

The core-periphery economic differences implicit in the cleavage model reveal that the internal spatial arrangement of an independent country influences economic



FIGURE 6.21 Coat of arms of the ethnic Republic of Sakha in Russia. The inscription is bilingual—Sakha and Russian—and the picture of the horse rider is taken from ancient primitive rock art. *Why might this ancient image have been used in the coat of arms of a republic seeking increased autonomy?* (Source: Courtesy of the government of the Republic of Sakha.)

patterns, presenting a cultural interaction of politics and the economy. Moreover, laws differ from one country to another, which affects economic land use. As a result, political boundaries can take on an economic character as well.

For example, the U.S.–Canadian border in the Great Plains crosses an area of environmental and cultural similarity. Yet the presence of the border, representing the limits of jurisdiction of two different bodies of law and regulations, fostered differences in agricultural practices. In the United States, an act passed in the 1950s encouraged sheep raising by guaranteeing an incentive price for wool. No such law was passed in Canada. Consequently, sheep became far more numerous on the American side of the border, whereas Canadian farmers devoted more attention to swine (Figure 6.22).



Nature-Culture

What is the relationship between politics and the environment? How people use the land and natural resources is profoundly influenced by politics.

Whether a particular habitat is conserved or degraded often has much to do with the structures of a country's land laws, tax codes, and agricultural policies. However, increasingly, politics is being defined by changing environmental conditions. National policies about environmental protection, guerrillas seeking a secure base for their operations, and the natural defense provided for an independent country by a surrounding sea all reveal an intertwining of environment and politics. How governments respond to ecological crises like the loss of biodiversity, pollution, and climate change has become an important political issue. Let's examine this complex two-way interaction between politics and the environment.

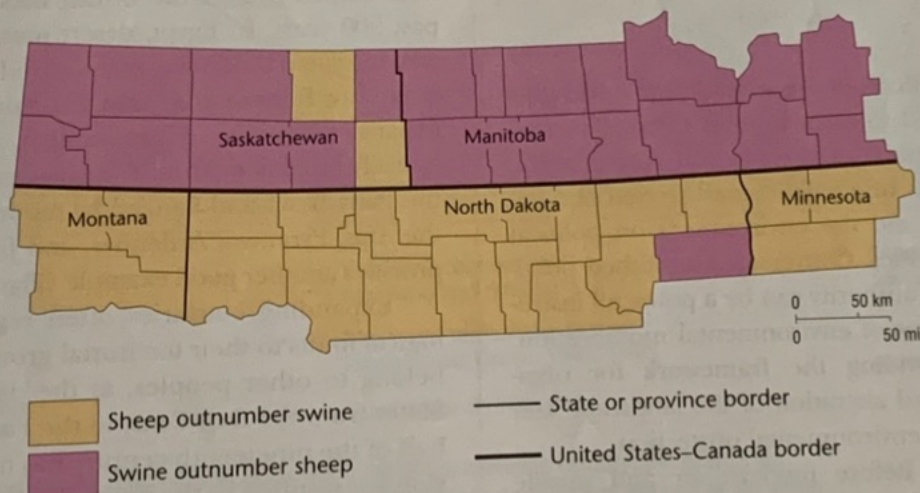


FIGURE 6.22 The political impact on the economy. Government intervention can be seen in the choice of livestock in the border area between the United States and Canada. Sheep are more numerous than swine on the U.S. side of the boundary, partly because of government-backed price incentives for wool. *The map reflects conditions in the 1960s. Since then, the contrast has essentially disappeared. Why might that have happened?* (Source: Reitsma, 1971: 220–221. See also Reitsma, 1988.)

Chain of Explanation

When geographers Piers Blaikie and Harold Brookfield used the term *political ecology*, they were interested in trying to understand how political and economic forces affect people's relationships to the land. They suggested that focusing on proximate or immediate causes—for example, the farmer dumping pesticides in a river or the poor peasant cutting a patch of tropical forest—provided an inadequate and misleading explanation of human-environment relations. As an alternative, they developed the idea of a “chain of explanation” as a method for identifying ultimate causes. The chain of explanation begins with the individual “land managers,” the people with direct responsibility for land-use decisions—the farmers, timber cutters, firewood gatherers, or livestock keepers. The chain of explanation then moves up in spatial scale, tracing the land managers' economic, cultural, and political relationships from the local to the national and, ultimately, to the global scale.

One of the primary areas addressed by the chain-of-explanation approach is the character of the state, particularly the way in which national land laws, natural resource policies, tax codes, and credit policies influence land-use decision making. For example, if a state assesses high taxes on land improvements, such as terracing and channeling, its tax policies actually create disincentives for land managers to implement soil conservation measures. Conversely, if a state provides cheap loans to land managers to build such structures, its credit policies encourage soil conservation. There are many examples of state influences on individual land-use decisions, leading Blaikie and Brookfield to argue that one cannot fully explain the causes of environmental problems without analyzing the role of the state.

Geopolitics

Spatial variations in politics and the spread of political phenomena are often linked to terrain, soils, climate, natural resources, and other aspects of the physical environment. The term **geopolitics** was originally coined to describe the influence of geography and the environment on political entities. Conversely, established political authority can be a powerful instrument of environmental modification, providing the framework for organized alteration of the landscape and for environmental protection.

Before modern air and missile warfare, a country's survival was often

aided by some sort of natural protection, such as surrounding mountain ranges, deserts, or seas; bordering marshes or dense forests; or outward-facing escarpments. Political geographers named such natural strongholds **folk fortresses**. The

geopolitics

The influence of the habitat on political entities.

folk fortress

A stronghold area with natural defensive qualities, useful in the defense of a country against invaders.

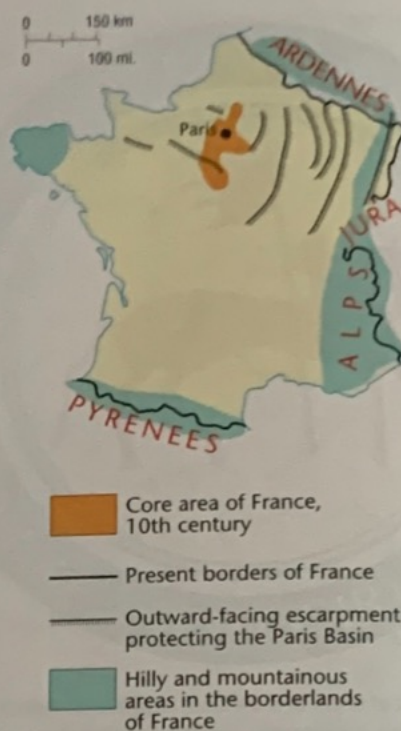


FIGURE 6.23 The distribution of landforms in France. Terrain features such as ridges, hills, and mountains offer protection. Outward-facing escarpments form a folk fortress that protected the core area and capital of France until as recently as World War I. Hill districts and mountain ranges lend stability to French boundaries in the south and southeast.

folk fortress might shield an entire country or only its core area. In either case, it is a valuable asset. Surrounding seas have helped protect the British Isles from invasion for the past 900 years. In Egypt, desert wastelands to the east and west insulated the fertile, well-watered Nile Valley core. In the same way, Russia's core area was shielded by dense forests, expansive marshes, bitter winters, and vast expanses of sparsely inhabited lands. France—centered on the plains of the Paris Basin and flanked by mountains and hills such as the Alps, Pyrenees, Ardennes, and Jura along its borders—provides another good example (Figure 6.23).

Expanding countries often regard coastlines as the logical limits to their territorial growth, even if those areas belong to other peoples, as the drive across the United States from the East Coast to the Pacific Ocean in the first half of the nineteenth century has made clear. U.S. expansion was justified by the doctrine of manifest destiny, which was based on the belief that the Pacific shoreline offered the logical and predestined western border for the country. Underlying the doctrine was a racist ideology of Anglo-Saxon superiority, which held that Native Americans were savages blocking the progress of civilization and the

productive use of the western lands. A similar doctrine led Russia to expand in the directions of the Mediterranean and Baltic seas and the Pacific and Indian oceans.

The Heartland Theory

Discussions of environmental influence, manifest destiny, and Russian expansionism lead naturally to the **heartland theory** of Halford Mackinder. Pounded in the early twentieth century and based on environmental determinism, the heartland theory addresses the balance of power in the world and, in particular, the possibility of world conquest based on natural habitat advantage. It held

heartland theory

A 1904 proposal by Halford Mackinder that the key to world conquest lay in control of the interior of Eurasia.

heartland

The interior of a sizable landmass, removed from maritime connections; in particular, the interior of the Eurasian continent.

rimland

The maritime fringe of a country or continent; in particular, the western, southern, and eastern edges of the Eurasian continent.

that the Eurasian continent was the most likely base from which to launch a successful campaign for world conquest.

In examining this huge landmass, Mackinder discerned two environmental regions: the **heartland**, which lies remote from the ice-free seas, and the **rimland**, the densely populated coastal fringes of Eurasia in the east, south, and west (Figure 6.24). Far from the sea, the heartland was invulnerable to the naval power of rimland empires, but the cavalry and infantry of the heartland could spill out through diverse natural gateways and invade the rimland region. Mackinder thus reasoned that a

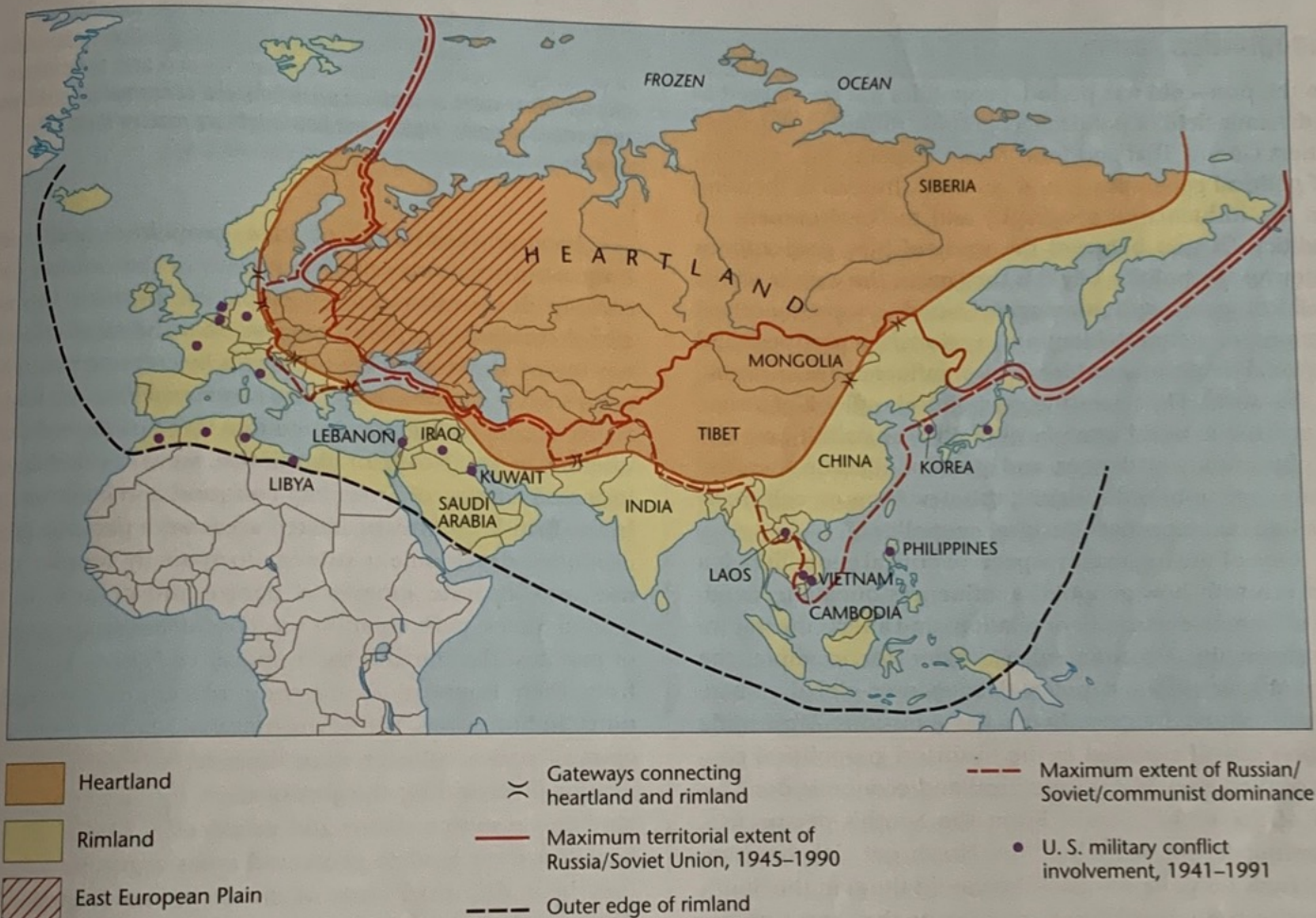


FIGURE 6.24 Heartland versus rimland in Eurasia. For most of the twentieth century, the heartland, epitomized by the Soviet Union and communism, was seen as a threat to America and the rest of the world, a notion based originally on the environmental deterministic theory of the political geographer Halford Mackinder. Control of the East European Plain would permit rule of the entire heartland, which, in turn, would be the territorial base for world conquest. During the cold war, 1945 to 1990, the United States and its rimland allies sought to counter this perceived menace by a policy of containment—resisting every expansionist attempt by the heartland powers. (After Mackinder, 1904; Spykman, 1944.)

unified heartland power could conquer the maritime countries with relative ease. He believed that the East European Plain would be the likely base for unification. As Russia had already unified this region at the time, Mackinder, in effect, predicted that the Russians would pursue world conquest.

Following Russia's communist revolution in 1917, the leaders of rimland empires and the United States employed a policy of containment. This policy, in no small measure, found its origin in Mackinder's theory and resulted in numerous wars to contain what was then considered a Russian-inspired conspiracy of communist expansion. Overlooked all the while were the fallacies of the heartland theory, particularly its reliance on the discredited doctrine of environmental determinism. In the end, Russia proved unable to hold together its own heartland empire, much less conquer the rimland and the world.

Geopolitics Today

In the post-cold war period, geopolitics has reemerged as a dynamic field of political-geographic thought. As geographers Gerard Toal and John Agnew explain, the meaning of political geography is now reversed. Instead of focusing on the influence of geography and the environment on politics, "it now becomes the study of how geography is informed by politics." By this they mean the ways in which political goals and ideologies, based on preconceived notions of cultural identities, regional stereotypes, and regional development hierarchies, influence the ordering of the world. How does the geopolitical outlook of a state structure the world into places of crisis or stability, regions of opportunity or danger, and states of allies or enemies? Many geographers distinguish this new focus on culture by labeling their approach "critical geopolitics."

One of the important aspects of critical geopolitics is a concern with how geopolitics influences our understanding of human-environment relations and affects the way we transform the environment. Consider, for example, the current scientific and policy debates over global climate change caused by greenhouse gas emissions. Worldwide debates must be placed in the historical geopolitical context of the global North's political and economic domination of the global South. From the South's perspective, according to Simon Dalby, "the North got rich by using fossil fuels for generations. Why should those in the South forgo the same possibilities just because they come on the development scene a little later?" According to advocates of the South, the North's ideas about restricting future emissions of greenhouse gases globally will have a disadvantageous effect on the South's economic development. Thus, questions of global environmental management are not restricted to the realm of science and technology; they also fall squarely in the realm of geopolitics.

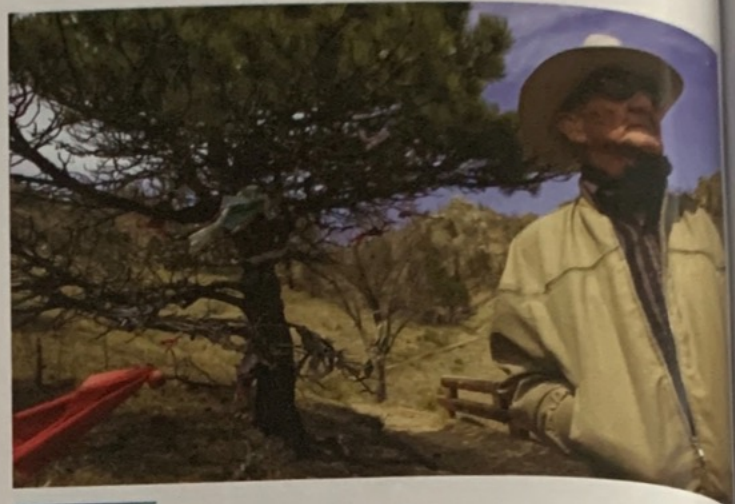


FIGURE 6.25 Two visions of the landscape. Johnson Holy Rock looks out over Bear Butte State Park in the Black Hills near Sturgis, South Dakota. The Oglala Sioux Tribe of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, of which Holy Rock is a member, considers the park area to be sacred ground. *What kinds of conflicts arise between conservation goals and indigenous peoples' rights, and how might we resolve them?* (Ann Heisenfelt/AP Photo.)

Another illustration of how geopolitics influences human-environment relations is seen in the debates concerning the conservation of global biodiversity. Current global conservation policy suggests that the most effective way to save the world's biodiversity is by creating protected areas such as national parks and reserves. However, Roderick Neumann has demonstrated that these protected areas, whether in the North or the South, were created in the historical context of European conquest and colonization. In the British Empire, protected areas were part of a grand economic development strategy to spatially reorder colonies into separate spheres of nature and culture. In the United States, park creation was conducted in the context of manifest destiny and the removal of Native Americans from their homelands and their placement on reservations. In both cases, the environmental management strategies of native cultures were denigrated as immoral and irrational, providing the justification for discarding local land and resource claims and practices. Today, those who have lost their land to protected areas argue bitterly that they bear the main costs of conservation (Figure 6.25). Thus, as with the case of global climate change, the North-South debates over strategies for the conservation of global biodiversity fall under the domain of geopolitics.

Warfare and Environmental Destruction

Of course, many political actions have an ecological impact, but perhaps none are as devastating as warfare.



FIGURE 6.26 A Kuwaiti oil field ablaze during the Persian Gulf War, 1991, gives new meaning to the expression “scorched earth.” Severe ecological damage almost invariably accompanies warfare. *Could modern war be waged without such damage?* (Noel Quidu/Gamma Liaison.)

“Scorched earth,” the systematic destruction of resources, has been a favored practice of retreating armies for millennia. Even military exercises and tests can be devastating. Certain islands in the Pacific were rendered uninhabitable, perhaps forever, by American hydrogen bomb testing in the 1950s. Actions during the Persian Gulf War of 1991 included an oil spill of 294 million gallons (1.1 billion liters) covering 400 square miles (1000 square kilometers) in the gulf waters, with the attendant loss of flora and fauna; the burning of oil fields; the mass bulldozing

of sand by the Iraqis to make defensive berms, with consequent wind erosion and loss of vegetation; and the solid-waste pollution produced by 500,000 coalition forces in the Arabian Desert, including 6 million plastic bags discarded weekly by American forces alone (Figure 6.26).

Clearly, warfare—especially modern high-tech warfare—is environmentally catastrophic. From an ecological standpoint, it does not matter who started or won a war. Everyone loses when such destruction occurs, given the global interconnectedness of the life-supporting ecosystem.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

How does politics influence landscape?
How are landscapes politicized? The world over, national politics is literally

written on the landscape. State-driven initiatives for frontier settlement, economic development, and territorial control have profound effects on the landscape. Conversely, political writers and politicians look to landscape as a source of imagery to support or discredit political ideologies.

Imprint of the Legal Code

Many laws affect the cultural landscape. Among the most noticeable are those that regulate the land-survey system

because they often require that land be divided into specific geometric patterns. As a result, political boundaries can become highly visible (Figure 6.27, page 220). In Canada, for example, the laws of the French-speaking province of Québec encourage land survey in long, narrow parcels, but most English-speaking provinces, such as Ontario, use a rectangular system. Thus, the political border between Québec and Ontario can be spotted easily from the air.

Legal imprints can also be seen in the cultural landscape of urban areas. In Rio de Janeiro, height restrictions on buildings have been enforced for a long time. The result is a waterfront lined with buildings of uniform height (Figure 6.28, page 220). By contrast, most American cities have no height restrictions, allowing skyscrapers to dominate the central city. The consequence is a jagged skyline for cities such as San Francisco or New York City. Many



FIGURE 6.27 Can you find the United States–Mexico border in this picture? The scene is near Mexicali, the capital of Baja California Norte. Why does the cultural landscape so vividly reveal the political border? (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

other cities around the world lack height restrictions, such as Malaysia's Kuala Lumpur, which has the world's tallest skyscrapers.

Perhaps the best example of how political philosophy and the legal code are written on the landscape is the so-called township and range system of the United States. The system is the brainchild of Thomas Jefferson—an early U.S.

president and one of the authors of the U.S. Constitution—who chaired a national committee on land surveying that resulted in the U.S. Land Ordinance of 1785. Jefferson's ideas for surveying, distributing, and settling the western frontier lands as they were cleared of Native Americans were based on a political philosophy of "agrarian democracy." Jefferson believed that political democracy had to be founded on economic democracy, which in turn required a national pattern of equitable land-ownership by small-scale independent farmers. In order to achieve this agrarian democracy, the western lands would need to be surveyed into parcels that could then be sold at prices within reach of family farmers of modest means.

Jefferson's solution was the township and range system, which established a grid of square-shaped "townships" with 6-mile (9.6-kilometer) sides across the Midwest and West. Each of these was then divided into 36 sections of 1 square mile (2.6 square kilometers), which were in turn divided into quarter-sections, and so on. Sections were to be the basic landholding unit for a class of independent farmers. Townships were to provide the structure for self-governing communities responsible for public schools, policing, and tax collection. With the exception of the 13 original colonies and a few other states or portions of states, a gridlike landscape was imposed on the entire country as a result of Jefferson's political philosophy and accompanying land-survey system (Figure 6.29).

Physical Properties of Boundaries

Demarcated political boundaries can also be strikingly visible, forming border landscapes. Political borders are



FIGURE 6.28 Legal height restrictions, or their absence, can greatly influence urban landscapes. Singapore (left), the city-state at the tip of the Malay Peninsula, lacks such restrictions, and its skyline is punctuated by spectacular skyscrapers. In Rio de Janeiro (right), by contrast, height restrictions allow the natural environment to provide the "high-rises." (Left: S. Thinakaran/AP Photo; Right: Martin Wendler/Peter Arnold, Inc.)





FIGURE 6.29 Imposing order on the land. This aerial view of Canyon County, Idaho, farmland reveals a landscape grid pattern. This pattern was imposed on the landscape across much of the United States following the passage of the Land Ordinance of 1785. (David Frazier/Image Works)

usually most visible where restrictions limit the movement of people between neighboring countries. Sometimes such boundaries are even lined with cleared strips, barriers,

pillboxes, tank traps, and other obvious defensive installations. At the opposite end of the spectrum are international borders, such as that between Tanzania and Kenya in East Africa, that are unfortified, thinly policed, and in many places very nearly invisible. Even so, undefended borders of this type are usually marked by regularly spaced boundary pillars or cairns, customhouses, and guardhouses at crossing points (**Figure 6.30**).

The visible aspect of international borders is surprisingly durable, sometimes persisting centuries or even millennia after the boundary becomes obsolete. Ruins of boundary defenses, some dating from ancient times, are common in certain areas. The Great Wall of China is probably the best-known reminder of past boundaries (**Figure 6.31**, page 222). Hadrian's Wall in England, which marks the northern border during one stage of Roman occupation and parallels the modern border between England and Scotland, is a similar reminder.

A quite different type of boundary, marking the territorial limits of urban street gangs, is evident in the central areas of many American cities. The principal device used by these gangs to mark their turf is spray-paint graffiti. Geographers David Ley and Roman Cybriwsky studied this phenomenon in Philadelphia. They found borders marked by externally directed, aggressive epithets, taunts, and obscenities placed there to warn neighboring gangs. A street gang of white youths, for example, plastered its border with an African-American gang's neighborhood with slogans such as "White Power" and "Do Not Enter [District] 21-W, _____." The gang's core area, its "home corner," contains internally supportive graffiti, such as "Fairmount Rules" or a roster of gang members. Thus, a perceptive observer can map gang territories on the basis of these political landscape features.



FIGURE 6.30 Even peaceful, unpoliced international borders often appear vividly in the landscape. Sweden and Norway insist on cutting a swath through the forest to mark their common boundary. *Why would they insist on making the boundary line so visible?* (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)



FIGURE 6.31 The Great Wall of China is probably the most spectacular political landscape feature ever created and one of the few made by humans that is visible from outer space. The wall, which is 1500 miles (2400 kilometers) long, was constructed over many centuries by the Chinese in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to protect their northern boundary from adjacent tribes of nomadic herders. *Can you think of comparable modern structures?* (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

The Impress of Central Authority

Attempts to impose centralized government appear in many facets of the landscape. Railroad and highway patterns focused on the national core area, and radiating



FIGURE 6.32 The Statue of Liberty and the Rising Sun flag are widely recognized national symbols of the United States and Japan, respectively. *Can you think of other iconic landscapes that symbolize a nation?* (Left: Eyewire/Getty Images; Right: Kimimasa Mayama/EPA/Landov.)

outward like the spokes of a wheel to reach the hinterlands of the country, provide good indicators of central authority. In Germany, the rail network developed largely before unification of the country in 1871. As a result, no focal point stands out. However, the superhighway system of autobahns, encouraged by Hitler as a symbol of national unity and power, tied the various parts of the Reich to such focal points as Berlin or the Ruhr industrial district.

The visibility of provincial borders within a country also reflects the central government's strength and stability. Stable, secure countries, such as the United States, often permit considerable display of provincial borders. Displays aside, such borders are easily crossed. Most state boundaries in the United States are marked with signboards or other features announcing the crossing. By contrast, unstable countries, where separatism threatens national unity, often suppress such visible signs of provincial borders. Also in contrast, such "invisible" borders may be exceedingly difficult to cross when a separatist effort involves armed conflict.

Reflecting on Geography

What visible imprints of the Washington, D.C.-based central government can be seen in the political landscape of the United States?

National Iconography on the Landscape

The cultural landscape is rich in symbolism and visual metaphor, and political messages are often conveyed through such means. Statues of national heroes or heroines and



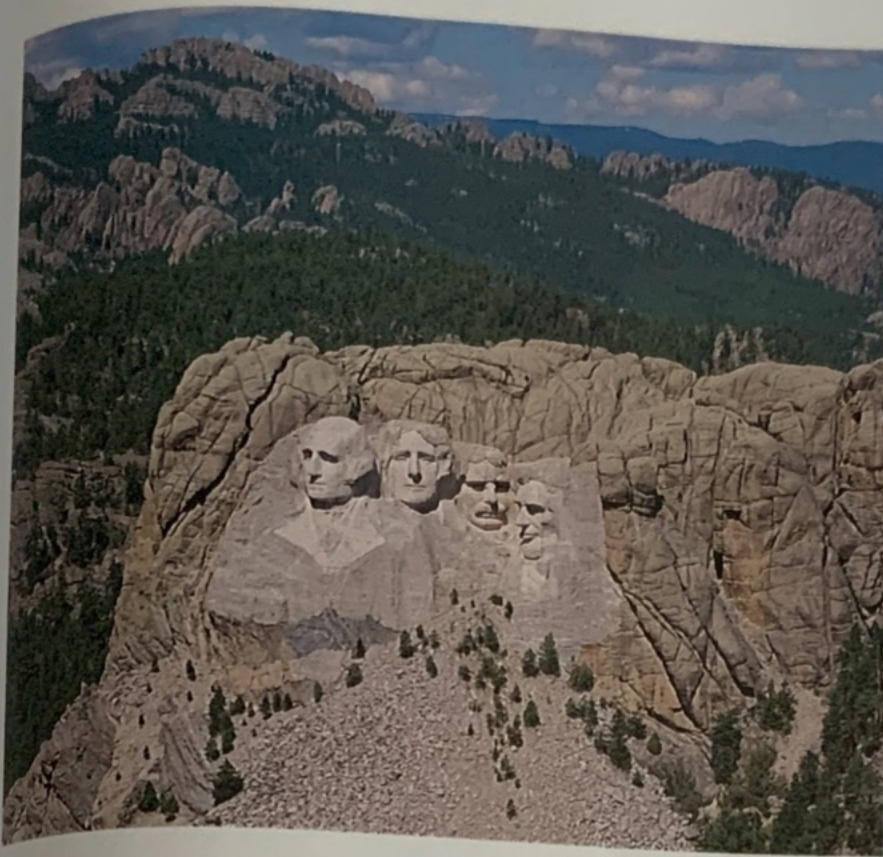


FIGURE 6.33 Mount Rushmore, in the Black Hills of South Dakota, presents a highly visible expression of American nationalism, an element of the political landscape. *If political landscapes are created by an elite, in an effort to legitimize and justify their control over territory, then who might disapprove of this monument?* (Brownie Harris/The Stock Market.)

of symbolic figures such as the goddess Liberty or Mother Russia form important parts of the political landscape, as do assorted monuments. The elaborate use of national colors can be visually very powerful as well. Landscape symbols such as the Rising Sun flag of Japan, the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor, and the Latvian independence pillar in Riga (which stood untouched throughout half a century of Russian-Soviet rule) evoke deep patriotic emotions (Figures 6.32 and 6.33). The sites of heroic (if often futile) resistance against invaders, as at Masada in Israel, prompt similar feelings of nationalism.

Some geographers theorize that the political iconography of landscape derives from an elite, dominant group in a country's population and that its purpose is to legitimize or justify its power and control over an area. The dominant group seeks both to rally emotional support and to arouse fear in potential or real enemies. As a result, the iconographic political landscape is often controversial or contested, representing only one side of an issue. Look again at Figure 6.33. The area in which Mount Rushmore stands, the Black Hills, is sacred to the Native Americans who controlled the land before whites seized it. How might these Native Americans, the Lakota Sioux, perceive this monument? Are any other political biases contained in it? Cultural landscapes are

always complicated and subject to differing interpretations and meanings, and political landscapes are no exception.

Cultural-geographic studies of the political iconography of landscape have greatly enriched our understanding of political geography. Stephen Daniels, for example, demonstrated the importance of woodland landscapes for "naturalizing" ideas about the political and social order in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century England. Oak woodlands were imagined to embody the traditional conservative values associated with the economic and political dominance of the landed aristocracy. Newly planted coniferous woodlands of pine and fir were seen as a threat to the traditional order and a sign of the disruptive influence of the emerging class of industrial capitalists. Thus, debates over competing political ideologies were blended with debates over competing landscape aesthetics.

In a more contemporary study, geographer Gail Hollander has demonstrated the important symbolic role that the landscape and environment of the Florida Everglades have played in U.S. presidential elections (Figure 6.34, page 224). The symbolic role of the Everglades changed over time, from the 1928 to the 2004 presidential campaigns. In 1928, it was presented as worthless swampland. As such, it played a key role in the election of Herbert Hoover, who



FIGURE 6.34 Everglades National Park in Florida has long played a role in U.S. presidential politics. Visits to iconic national parks and protected landscapes are common in U.S. political campaigns and are meant to symbolize a candidate's commitment to protecting the environment. (Courtesy of Roderick Neumann.)

promised to drain it for agricultural development. By the 1970s, it was seen as an endangered wetland in need of protection and ecological restoration. Thus, in the 1996, 2000, and 2004 presidential campaigns, the candidates' positions on the Everglades were seen as indicators of

their commitment to the environment. For example, when George W. Bush posed with pruning shears in the Everglades in May 2004, it offered him a chance to symbolically link his presidential campaign to the ecological restoration of what has come to be viewed as a national treasure.

CONCLUSION

Political spatial variations—from local voting patterns to the spatial arrangement of international power blocs—add yet another dimension to the complex human mosaic. In particular, nation-states operate as vital functional regions, which help shape many aspects of culture. Regions constantly change as political innovations ebb and flow across their surfaces. Political phenomena as varied as the nation-state, separatist movements, women's suffrage, and the territorial expansion of countries move along the paths of diffusion. Globalization interacts with political geography in complex and even contradictory ways. The forces of globalization have strengthened some features of the nation-state and weakened others.

Nature-culture relations are important to political geography, and the tools of political ecology help us understand the links between systems of power and the physical environment. Countries do not exist in an environmental vacuum. The spatial patterns of landforms often find reflection in boundaries, core areas, folk fortresses, and geopolitical strategies. Likewise, political culture very much influences our ideas and judgments about landscape and environment. Finally, politics leaves diverse imprints on the cultural land-

scape, and landscapes often provide the symbolism and visual metaphors to support or refute political ideologies. Political geography is clearly important to understanding the human mosaic

DOING GEOGRAPHY

The Complex Geography of Congressional Redistricting

Congressional redistricting normally happens every 10 years in the United States, following each national census. In some cases, such as Texas in 2002, redistricting occurs between censuses. Although soon proved wrong, newspaper accounts at the time predicted that Texas's midcensus redistricting would protect the Republican Party's majority in the U.S. Congress for the foreseeable future. Does this midcensus redistricting fall under the category of Republican gerrymandering, as some claim, or is it, as the Texas Republican Party argues, a case of necessary adjustments in response to population shifts? Either way, the case of Texas demonstrates how critically important the drawing of congressional district boundaries is to democratic governance.

This exercise requires you to identify cases of possible gerrymandering in your home state or an adjacent state. To do so, follow the steps below.