

Geography 365 Final Exam Study Notes – Fall 2004

Based on the text "Political Geography 3rd Edition" by Martin Glassner / Chuck Fahrer
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The Role of the United Nations

- First used mandate system, then the trusteeship system.
 - Trusteeship system was for the "progressive development toward self-government or independence.
 - Under the trusteeship system a territory is watched over by a sponsor state.
 - Used to handle colonies.
 - Mandates were either made into independent states or put under the trusteeship system. Two exceptions: Israel and South Africa
- It was the general assembly that partitioned Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states. Jerusalem remained an international enclave.
 - When the British withdrew in May 1948, Jewish leaders promptly declared the State of Israel (on 14 May) and Arab armies from Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon immediately invaded.
 - Invasion failed, with Israel actually gaining territory.
 - Israel admitted into the UN in 1949.
 - This occurred during the change from the UN mandate system to the trusteeship system.
- South West Africa held by South Africa.
 - South Africa wanted to annex the territory. UN commission set up to manage the area until independence.
 - South West Africa eventually becomes Namibia.
 - The small parcel of territory at Walvis Bay was a natural harbor, with lots of South African military installations so South Africa didn't want to give it up. It was eventually claimed by Namibia.
- These two exceptions to the success of the mandate-trusteeship system resulted from particular local conditions not found in other territories.
- Decolonization has certainly not been easy. Much of the credit for the relative orderliness of the process must go to the United Nations, even without the trusteeship system.
- Its first experience with colonies was the matter of the disposition of the former Italian colonies.
 - Libya (1951), Somaliland (independent after 10 years of trusteeship by Italy), Eritrea federated with Ethiopia.
- The UN made it a goal to end all colonial efforts.

Themes in Electoral Geography

- The number of districts and their boundaries can have profound influences on the composition of the legislature independent of the actual total votes for candidates and/or parties.

Electoral Districts

- Redistricting of electoral boundaries is often done in the US as population changes. The goal is to equally represent the population, not the geographic area. This is done after census?
- Gerrymandering is a device to give an advantage to a particular party or group by drawing district boundaries in advantageous shapes.
 - Could be used to create a majority of black people, for example, in one district. This could have a strong influence on the vote results of that district.
 - This can be used to give incumbents unfair advantage.
 - Difficult to purge from the democratic process.

Chapter 16*

- There are thousands of nations in the world, few of which have States that they can claim as their own.
- Indigenous people: the people which are native to an area.
 - Not generally used to describe a group who remain dominant within a country.
 - Term is not a substitute for "ethnic" or "minority"
- Four key issues:
 - Self-determination and government
 - Land and physical environment
 - Self-government on the land (i.e. reserves)
 - Political organization at the national and global levels.
- Self-Determination and Government
 - Abuse of indigenous people has been a trend almost everywhere.
 - Commonly associated with colonialism, but continues after the colonies are formed into independent states.
 - They are still forced into:
 - Assimilation into dominant society.

- Involuntary sterilization – population control.
 - Forced migrations, evacuations.
 - General exclusion from developmental programs.
 - Nearly always at the lowest level in society, or excluded from it completely.
 - In essence, they are treated like colonies. They need self-government, but this is often seen as a threat to the sovereignty of the state.
- Land and Physical Environment
 - The land is usually at the heart of their entire culture.
 - Contrary to the state which treats land as a commodity.
 - Often indigenous peoples are placed on “reserves”
 - Most often, the reserve does not end up being on their “ancestral land”
- Politics
 - Many indigenous peoples have adopted political action as a way of achieving their interests.
 - Done through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
 - Some national, some international.

Geostrategy (Heartland and Rimland)

- Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914) – Felt that power on the sea was of utmost importance.
 - Predicted before the twentieth century that the containment of Russia and the control of China would become the joint concern of the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Japan.
- Halford John Mackinder (1861-1947) – Came up with the concept of “heartland”, referring to the Eurasian core which could not be penetrated by naval units.
 - Thought that the age of naval warfare was over.
 - Called the Eurasian core a ‘pivot area’ which was protected by not being accessible by naval units. He felt it would be able to build up a massive army and develop into a world power.
 - Felt that Eastern Europe was an “open door” into the pivotal heartland.
 - “Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the World.”
 - Problems with his theories:
 - He did not give enough credit to the growing power of North America.
 - Contradiction between his thesis of the power of the possessor of the Heartland and the relative weakness of Russia/USSR until WWII.
 - Failed to recognize the importance of air power.
- Nicholas John Spykman (1893 – 1943) – Rejected many of the thoughts of Mackinder. Felt instead that power in Eurasia was controlled by whoever had power over the “Rimland”, an area that is vulnerable to attack by both land and sea power.

Chapter 22

- A more humanistic geopolitical approach is arising now with the weakening of the two superpowers and the demise of colonial powers.
- Critical Geopolitics – Urges to expand our perspectives to a more holistic view.
 - Cold war was very bipolar, “us and them”.
 - Now we live in a much more multi-polar world.
- Buffer States and buffer zones, areas of weakness separating areas of strength, reducing conflict.
 - Eastern Europe, parts of the Middle East, and parts of Asia as a buffer zone for the Soviets.
- Bipolar Cold War – Soviet Union and its “satellites” versus the United States and its “friends and allies”.
 - Some countries chose to be neutral in the cold war, such as China, giving rise to the term “Third World”.
- Domino Theory – A theory suggesting that communism spread like a chain reaction from country to country because the communist leaders were so clever.
 - Led to “containment” of the communist powers.
 - Vietnam War.
 - Guided much of the American foreign policy of the era.
 - Now people are worried about the domino theory applying to radical Islamism in the Middle East.
 - Islamic Fundamentalism.

Terrorism

- Violence directed against any members of a society, as long as it advances the perpetrator’s directives.
 - Contrast with conventional warfare and guerrilla warfare.
 - Usually carried out by very small groups.
 - Considered both a form of war and criminal activity.
- Anti-terrorism is defensive in nature.
 - Security landscapes. Designed to enhance the security of the people.

- Counter-terrorism is offensive in nature.
 - Often carried out by elite forces. Delta force. Navy Seals.
- Neither anti-terrorism nor counter-terrorism can eliminate terrorist activities. One must study the situations that foster terrorism and eliminate them.
- Civilian deaths are usually higher as a result of conventional warfare due to collateral damage.

Afghanistan and the War on Terrorism

- Directly related to the Cold War Jihad waged by Afghan mujahideen against the Soviet army. Soviets invaded and installed a coup d'état, assuming they would restore stability to the country.
 - Because of the Cold War, the U.S. could not directly intervene, so instead they sent weapons and supplies to the mujahideen via Pakistan.
 - This policy failed, but it did succeed in training thousand of Arab Afghans (Afghanis) in military methods (including bin Laden) who were exposed to extremist Islam doctrine.
 - Upon return to their native countries, many of them joined Islamist opposition groups.
 - Al-Qaeda wants to install Islamic governments in other countries. This is religious nationalism. Fueled by irredentism, the idea that a country should be controlled by the ethnic groups from that area.

The Middle East

- Unique as it is the only part of the world that fringes on three continents.
- The Arab-Israel conflict for Israel. A territorial conflict.
- The stateless nation of Kurds in Iraq, Armenia, Iran, Syria and Turkey.
- Kuwait conflict which led to the 1st Gulf War. Iraq considers Kuwait one of its provinces.

South Asia

- Pakistan-India War in 1947. Never resolved. Pakistani-India line of control used instead.
- Dangerous because of the nuclear abilities of the parties involved.

East Asia

- Korean conflict. Led to starvation due to poor economics. A dangerous area become of nuclear power.
- China's problems with Taiwan. Views Taiwan as a renegade province. Nationalist China forces fled here in 1949.

International Trade

- There has been a general tendency for prices of manufactured goods to rise more rapidly than the prices of commodities in world trade, this worsening the terms of trade of those countries that are primarily producers of commodities and consumers of manufactured good, that is, the poor countries, generally former colonies.
- World Trade Organization http://www.wto.int/english/res_e/doload_e/inbr_e.pdf

Transnational Corporations

- Transnational corporations (TNCs) expanded rapidly after WWII.
 - Coinciding with decolonization, this movement conjured up images of a new form of colonialism.
 - Critics saw this as a threat to the sovereignty of small countries, especially those recently emerging from colonial status.
 - Many firms were actually larger and richer than some States.
- UN put a commission in place, the OECD, to monitor them.
 - Somewhat effective.
- TNC power declining somewhat due to pressure from intergovernmental organizations, national governments, and the general public.
 - Nestle baby formula scandal.
- TNCs based in developing countries have also helped to diffuse criticism.
 - Although they might do so somewhat reluctantly, they are taking steps to ensure good employment conditions, being considerate of the environment, and protecting the cultures native to the area.
 - Training and promotion for the locals.
- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) increasing, helping the world economy to grow.
- National boundaries becoming increasingly irrelevant in the definition of market and productions spaces.

European Union

- The best known economic group in the world.
 - Represents the highest degree of supranationalism.
- Brought a common European currency into use.
- See Wikipedia.

NAFTA

- Largest trading relationship in the world is between the US and Canada.
 - Long, undefended border. Similar cultures. Citizens of each country living in both countries.
 - Early on, initiated free trade for automobiles and automobile parts.
 - Signed the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement in Jan. 1988.
 - Elimination of all tariffs on bilateral trade within 10 years.

- Many Canadians were not happy about the agreement because of their fear of being swallowed up by the United States.
 - Some fear that Canadian social welfare system would be reduced to U.S. levels.
- Free trade area later expanded to include Mexico.
 - Fears in Mexico of being overrun by the more efficient US companies.
 - Fears in America about low Mexican wages putting Americans out of work.
- North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) brought into effect in January of 1994.
 - This time, the Americans were skeptical of the agreement.
 - Provides elimination of tariffs within 15 years.
 - Intellectual property is included in the agreement.
- Now work is being done on the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas.
 - Already signed by some countries.

The League of Nations

- Designed to curb aggressive war. Although ideas for it had been around for a long time, the horrors of World War I made things come more quickly.
 - Allies had been cooperating a great deal during the war, so plans for the league came very naturally after World War I. It took only a few days to draft up the League Covenant in 1919.
 - League of Nations operated until 1946, at which point the United Nations had begun to function.
 - Many people saw the league as a waste of time, since it was eventually thrown out. In reality though, its contributions to the international organization of peace were unmistakable.

The United Nations

- The United Nations was founded in 1945, under very similar conditions to the ones that brought about the formation of the League of Nations.
 - Benefited from the lessons that were learned while the League of Nations was operating.
- Membership in the United Nations has nearly become universal.
 - The participation of the United States and other major powers has been essential to its success. The UN is built on very firm foundations.
- Had an important role in the decolonization of many states.
- Sponsors large international conferences to discuss topics of concern.
 - Topics of food, population, human settlements, water, health, outer space, security and many more.
- Despite its successes, it has still received a lot of criticism.
 - There have been many proposals for reform.
 - It has still not brought an end to war.
- It is very far from being the world government. Nationalism is still the strongest force.

United Nations Peace Operations

- Peace operations can be broken down into three categories.
 - Peacemaking: Typically involves diplomatic actions, sometimes with military force, aimed at getting combatants to accept a ceasefire.
 - Peacekeeping: Forces brought into the zone of conflict from other nations.
 - Peace enforcement: If any of the combatant parties will not stop fighting, troops are deployed to force an end to the hostilities.

The Commonwealth

- A free association of 53 countries. Not an empire, alliance or trade group.
 - A very diverse group of states.
 - One thing in common is that they recognize the British sovereign as the head of the commonwealth, their former status as British colonies.
 - Involved in many types of things, from commerce to technology.

The French Community

- A product of France trying to retain its colonies.