Geopolitics: Political geography

* The state’s power to control space or territory and shape the foreign policy of individual states and international political relations (Knox and Marston)
* Peter Taylor: Geopolitics argues that power is firmly rooted in the physical nature of the world itself
* Ex: Cape Town important in the Age of Sail, but shifts once Suez Cana was cut
* Revenge of Geography (Robert D. Kaplan)
* Why worry about Geopolitics?
  + North Korea – USA
  + Taiwan
  + Ukraine
  + Break up of Yugoslavia, now it’s 7 states
* Friedrich Ratzel (1844-1904)
  + German Geographer trained in biology and chemistry
  + Biological metaphors, adopted works of Charles Darwin to describe growth and development of the state
  + Seven Laws of Geopolitics
  + Biological organism metaphors (growth and change are natural) power + territory
* Sir Halford Mackinder
  + First professor of geography at Oxford University
  + Heartland theory of geopolitics (1904)
    - Inner and Outer Crescent of Mackinder’s Heartland
    - Essentially a balance or trade-off between land-based and sea-based power
    - Whichever was dominant, would be able to control their region
    - Dominance changed through time
    - Napoleon and William Pitt divide up Europe in 1805
    - Ex: Mongol Invasions (1204-1330)
    - Ex: Dominance of sea-based power from 1450s (European colonization)
    - Ex: Land Dominance of Russians during WW2 (big land with railways)
    - Ex: Napoleon retreat, unable to beat the huge distances involved in a successful attack on Moscow
  + Importance of Eastern Europe: Eurocentric View
    - Strategic bottlenecks
    - Three Dicta of Geopolitics:
      * Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland?
      * Who rules the Heartland commands the World-island?
      * Who rules the World-island commands the world?
    - Sir Walter Raleigh (1608)
      * Whoso commands the sea, commands the trade of the world
      * Whoso commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world
  + After 222, Western strategic thinking was focused on:
    - Keeping Germany divided
    - Keeping bases in Germany
    - Surrounding the USSR through Central Europe
  + Technology affects strategic advantage
    - Technology has changed too much to support this simple model
    - Power + territory + technology
    - As technology changes so it confers strategic advantage on different parts of the world
    - French Guiana as on the Equator
    - Cold War Era (balance of power) 1945-1990
    - Nuclear Weapons: mutually assured destruction, balance of terror
    - Roxanne Panchesi: No Hiroshima in Africa (Alherian War, French Nuclear Testing in Sahara), UN debate of 1960 (Test site: Reganne)
      * 1960-1996: 200 nuclear tests
    - In French Polynesia (1966-1996)
  + The domino theory: Korea, Vietnam: If one state falls, all neighboring states might fall too
    - Cuban Missile Crisis
  + Collapse of Soviet Union (1990):
    - Balance power shifts entirely to the USA
    - More equal balance of power between more power blocks: US, Russia, China, Europe
    - More opportunity for some genuine multinationalism
* Environmental Scarcity:
  + Thomas Homer-Dixon (1999)
  + Definition: a scarcity of renewable natural resources that, if not addressed by technological, social or economic means, may cause social disruption or violent conflict as one of its outcomes
    - Demand-induced: due to population growth or increasing consumption
    - Supply-induced: due to degradation or depletion of natural resources
    - Structural: due to an unbalanced distribution of resources that affects less powerful groups in society
  + Eco-migration: a population movement caused by the degradation of land and essential natural resources
  + Environmental refugee: individuals fleeing the collapse of the environment in their homelands in order to make a new life for themselves (not political refugees)
  + Political refugees: individuals fleeing a fear of persecution on the specific grounds of:
    - Race
    - Religion
    - Nationality
    - Political belief
    - Others
  + Flooding: Maldives disappear
  + Political ecology: how politics affects our use of the environment
  + Disasters: extreme natural event (earthquake, tsunami)
    - Society cannot be rebuilt
    - Nature becomes a threat
    - They are socially constructed

Political Geography: The Nation-State:

* See how space and place will help us create ideas of identity
* Encyclopedia of Human Geography (Barney Warf)
* Nation state was seen as almost the ideal way to define a country and its borders
* 1648 Treaty of Westphalia
* The evolution of the idea of sovereignty
* The way in which the ideas of nation and state came together
* Sovereignty: the exercise of state power over people and territory, recognized by other states and codified by international law
* Nationalism: the feeling of belonging to a nation as well as a belief that a nation has a natural right to determine its own affairs
* Nation: a group of people often sharing common elements of culture, such as religion or language, or a history or political identity
* State: independent political unit with territorial boundaries that are internationally recognized by other political units
* Nation-state: an ideal form, consisting of a homogenous group of people governed by their own state
* History of Sovereignty:
  + A person was sovereign, individual rulers who forged kingdoms out of groups of people
  + Mostly by brute force
  + Loyalty was to an individual and not to a space (country or state)
  + Non-contiguous: politically part of a country/state, but not physically (Alaska)
  + Space did not matter as personal loyalty did
  + Change occurs once kings or queens get overthrown (Enlightenment)
  + The American Declaration of Independence (1776)
  + The nation-state tries to achieve a perfect union of the political/physical boundaries of the country
* Nation-state is not created:
  + Change physical borders of the state
    - Breakup (Yugoslavia, Kurdistan, Basque)
    - Yugoslavia split into 7 states (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Montenegro)
    - Expansion of previous states (German lebensraum, Cyprus annexation Turkey)
    - Redefinition of current borders (South Africa under apartheid, Israel/Palestine)
    - Bophuthatswana: South Africa Homelands
  + Change the type of people included in the state
    - Create (Canada’s assimilation policy, Quebec nationalism, create shared story)
    - Remove (ethnic cleansing, Nazi policies at Jews, Roma/gypsies people)
* Create a story of people/folk:
  + Benedict Anderson: Imagined community (cannot meet everyone at country, but welcome everyone that share common history) ex: Greeks with Egyptians
  + Pierre Nora: lieux de memoire (sites of memory, shared history based on told stories)
  + Folk housing, music, language, local foods can create a folk
* Non-places: International law can only protect people if they fall under its jurisdiction. Exceptions:
  + Those in places like Guantanamo Bay
  + Refugee claimants in international waters/airport who are denied help
  + Where countries have not signed international treaties
  + Assange (Wikileaks), Edward Snowdon exposed holes in system of international protection
* Canada is not a nation-state:
  + Post-modern world: no universal human rights, recognize local differences
  + Rise to more restricted set of rights of citizenship (Marshall)
  + Spaces of exclusion
* Universalism:
  + Expansion of the EU as a political and legal entity
  + UN’s gradual move to directly intervene in war-torn countries
  + Ethics of overseas intervention vs
  + Respecting local differences (concern of postmodernism)
  + Twinning: EU towns have links to other cities around the world

Geography of Elections:

* How democracies elect their representatives in sovereignty
* Not all democracies elect on the basis of spatial units
  + Hong Kong (before 1997)
  + Proportional Representation
* Geography of Politics:
  + Reappointment: process of allocating electoral seats to a geographical area
  + Redistricting: defining/redefining of territorial district boundaries (Reapportionment)
* Canada:
  + Nested set of jurisdictions that operate on different spatial scales and have different responsibilities:
    - Federal
    - Provincial
    - Municipal (each has its own type of representative, own type of special unit)
* British North America Act (1867)
  + Established that the four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, NB, NS should have a Parliament comprising of two houses: un-elected senate, elected House of Commons
* Representation Act 1985:
  + Three territories get 1 seat each
  + Population of Canada is then divided by 279
  + Produce the electoral quotient
  + The population of each province, when divided by the electoral quotient, produces the total number of seats that province has in the federal parliament
* As a result of population growth recorded in the 2011 census, 7 new seats were added:
  + Ontario
  + Alberta
  + British Columbia
* 2015 elections:
  + 30 new seats added to previous total of 308 (338 total)
  + BC 36 +6 to be 42
  + Alberta 28 + 6 to be 34
  + Ontario 106 + 15 to be 121
  + Quebec 75 +3 to be 78
  + Rest of provinces and territories unaltered
* For April 2024:
  + Quebec will maybe lose one seat in the next redrawing
* Redrawing boundaries:
  + The historical development of the riding
  + The strength to which areas within the riding identify with particular communities
  + A manageable geographical size is also important
  + Ridings should be of equal population size
* Gerrymandering:
  + Boundaries often influenced by political parties to their own benefit
  + The practice of redistricting for partisan purposes
  + Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry (US elections 1812)

Environmental Scarcity:

* Thomas Homer-Dixon
* Definition: Environmental scarcity is a scarcity of renewable natural resources that, if not addressed by technological, social or economic means, may cause social disruption or violent conflict as one of its outcomes
  + Demand-induced: due to population growth or increasing consumption
  + Supply-induced: due to degradation or depletion of natural resources
  + Structural: due to an unbalanced distribution of resources that affects less powerful groups in society
* Ecomigration: a population movement caused by the degradation of land and essential natural resources
* Environmental refugee: individuals fleeing the collapse of the environment in their homelands in order to make a new life for themselves
* 25-30 million political refugees in the world in any one year
  + Internally displaced people
* Political Ecology:
  + Stresses that human-environment relationships can only be adequately understood by relating patterns of resource use to political and economic forces