

Unit 4

Political Organization of Space



By: Carli Terrell (Orlando, Florida)

This PPT has been created using the information from the *AMSCO Human Geography: Preparing for the Advanced Placement Examination* book.
Palmer, David. *AMSCO Advanced Placement Human Geography*. Perfection Learning, 2019.



UNIT 4 – POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF SPACE

CH 10: TERRITORY, POWER, AND BOUNDARIES

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING (4.B)

By the end of this section, you will *understand* that **spatial political patterns reflect ideas of territoriality and power at a variety of scales.**

- **Territoriality:** **connection** of people, culture, and their economic system to the **land**.
- **Power:** geographic **control** over people, land, and resources.

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland

Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island

Who rules the World Island commands the world.

-Sir Halford John Mackinder, *British geographer*, 1919

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do boundaries reflect ideas of territoriality and political power on various scales?



LEARNING OBJECTIVE (4.B.1)

By the end of this section, you will *be able to* **explain the concepts of political power and territoriality.**

- a. Students will know that political power is expressed geographically as control over people, land, and resources (e.g., heartland, Rimland, and organic theories)
- b. Students will know that territoriality is the connection of people, their culture, and their economic systems to the land.

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

- **Geopolitics**
 - The study of the effects of geography on politics and relations among states
 - Relates to trade, resource management, and the environment on a global scale
- **Territoriality** is the willingness by one person or a group of people to defend space they claim
 - **Example:** influencing others or shaping events by asserting control over a space

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

- Why do some states grow powerful while others are weak?
- **Organic Theory**
 - Friedrich Ratzel (1844 – 1904)
 - Mnemonic
 - *Rats (Ratzel) are organisms (Organic)*



CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Organic Theory

- Influenced by the beliefs of Charles Darwin and
- Claimed that states are similar to organisms and applied the idea of natural selection to relationships among them
- States are born and need nourishment and living space (*lebensraum*), which they gain by **annexing** territory from weaker states
- If weak state stayed weak, it would cease to exist
- **Examples:** westward expansion in the United States and European colonization

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Heartland Theory

- Sir Halford Mackinder (1861 – 1947)
- Mnemonic
 - *Kind Heart* – Mack*inder*/*Heart*land
- This theory influenced policy decisions on a global scale through both world wars and many Cold War conflicts



CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Heartland Theory

- Europeans saw the success of colonial acquisitions and concluded that countries derived power from controlling water routes in the ocean
- Mackinder *dissented* (disagreed) and stated that land-based power was essential for global domination
- Domination of Eastern Europe → control of the heartland (Eastern Europe + Russia + Central Asia)
- Control of the heartland → World Island (Afro-Eurasia)



CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Heartland Theory

- Based on beliefs and geographic facts
 - Land transportation enabled military to move as fast on land as on water
 - Therefore control over land was more important than *maritime* power
 - Heartland has large coal deposits and other resources
 - Heartland is mostly landlocked and therefore well-protected
 - Only way of invasion is through Eastern Europe
 - “World Island” includes the majority of Earth’s land and population

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Rimland Theory

- Nicholas Spykman (1892 – 1943)



CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Rimland Theory

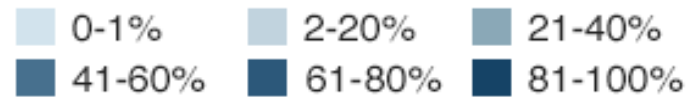
- Argued that power is derived from controlling strategic maritime areas of the world
- Comprises densely populated coastal areas outside the heartland.
- Spykman believed this area provided more resources including people and access to the sea
- His writing influenced western policymakers throughout the Cold War and were reflected in the creation of NATO and Truman's containment policy

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality Connects Culture and Economy

- Although maps may show boundaries of a state as clear, precise, and well-defined lines, some boundaries spark disagreement or are ignored completely.
- Similarly, a state's sovereignty may be declared on paper but not fully accepted in reality.
- Example: Sunni and Shia Muslims – two branches of Islam divided over the question of who should succeed Muhammed after his death in 632. These groups are still divided and has led to violence.

Estimated distribution of Shia Muslims in the Middle East



Source: CRS, Pew Research, CIA world factbook

CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality Connects Culture and Economy

- Territoriality is closely connected to economic issues
- **Example:** Spratly Islands – Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, Taiwan, and China claim sovereignty over these islands in the South China Sea. Some economic reasons include unconfirmed access to petroleum, fishing supplies food and work for the people, and major international shipping lanes pass through this region.



CONCEPTS OF POLITICAL POWER AND TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality Connects Culture and Economy

- As of 2016, each of the countries involved (except Brunei) occupied at least part of the island group
- China has attempted to expand the size of its holdings through dredging and land reclamation, building up small reefs into full-fledged islands

