

Chapter 10:

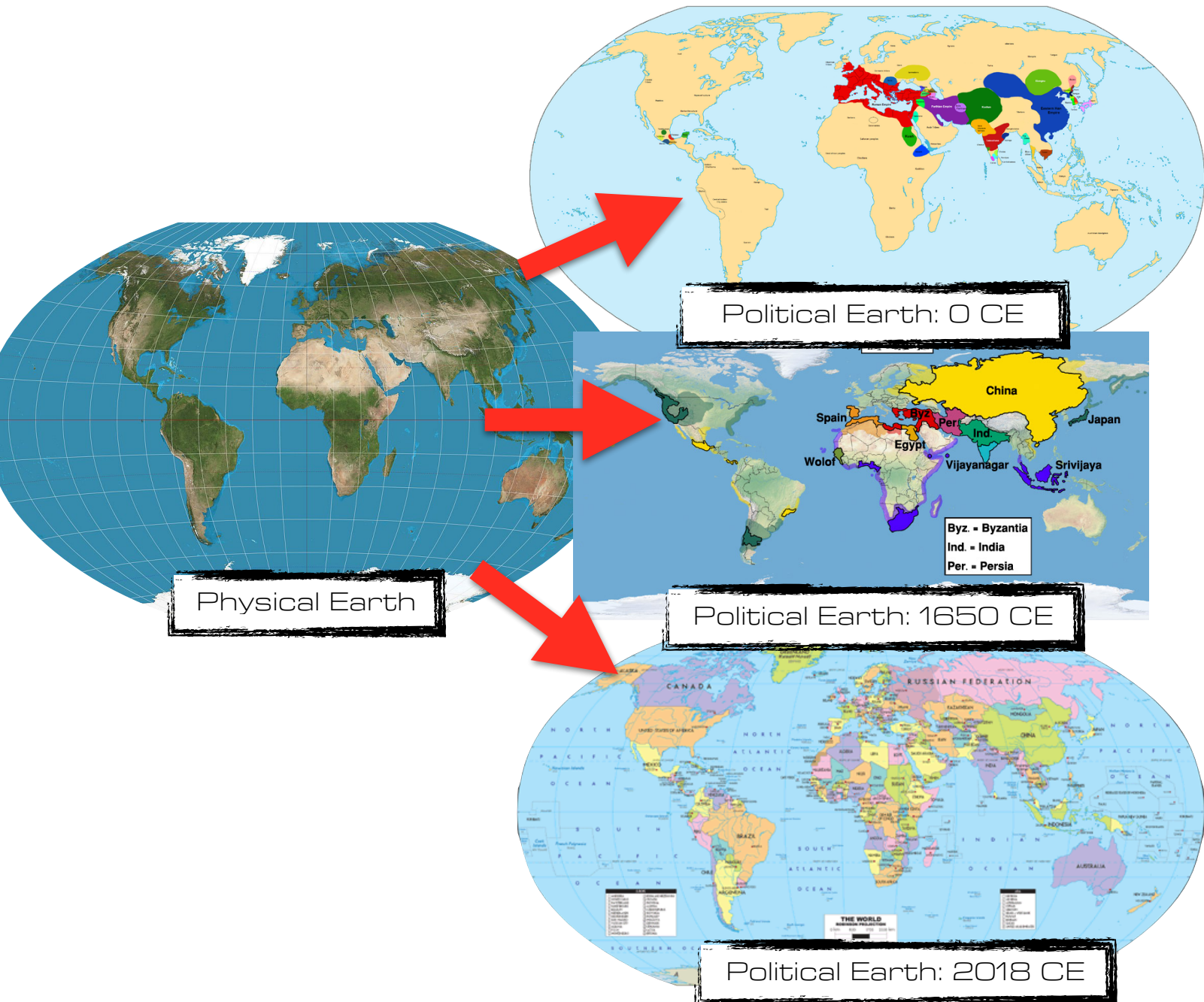
A Place in This World

Introduction - Organizing Earth

In the beginning of time, there was an earth, yet to be altered by human interaction. In the modern era, the entire surface of the earth has become conquered and controlled by over 190 states and 7 billion people. How did this come to be? How did human societies evolve from transhumance hunters and gatherers into multinational states with clearly defined and protected borders? What is next for the political geography as economic and political forces are emerging that have moved beyond borders into a new, globalized human experience?

How will people, cities, and states find their place in this ever changing world?

INSIGHT: Chapter 9 focused on political geography inside of the State. Chapter 10 will be focusing on political geography internationally, looking at how states interact and engage each other regionally and globally.



A. Boundaries

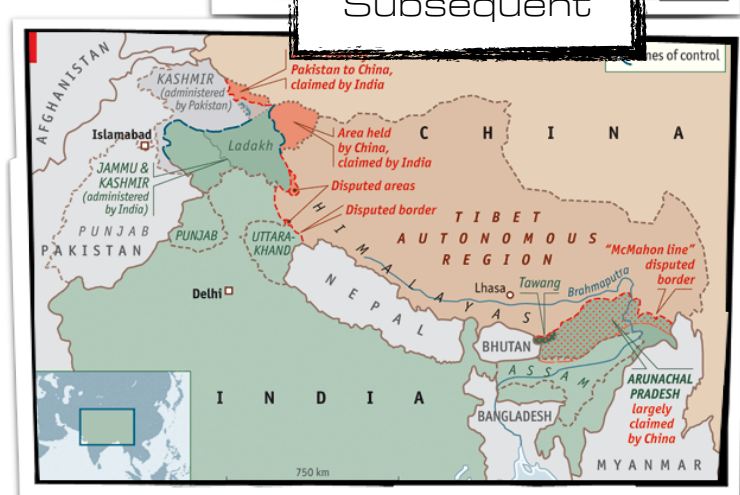
Introduction

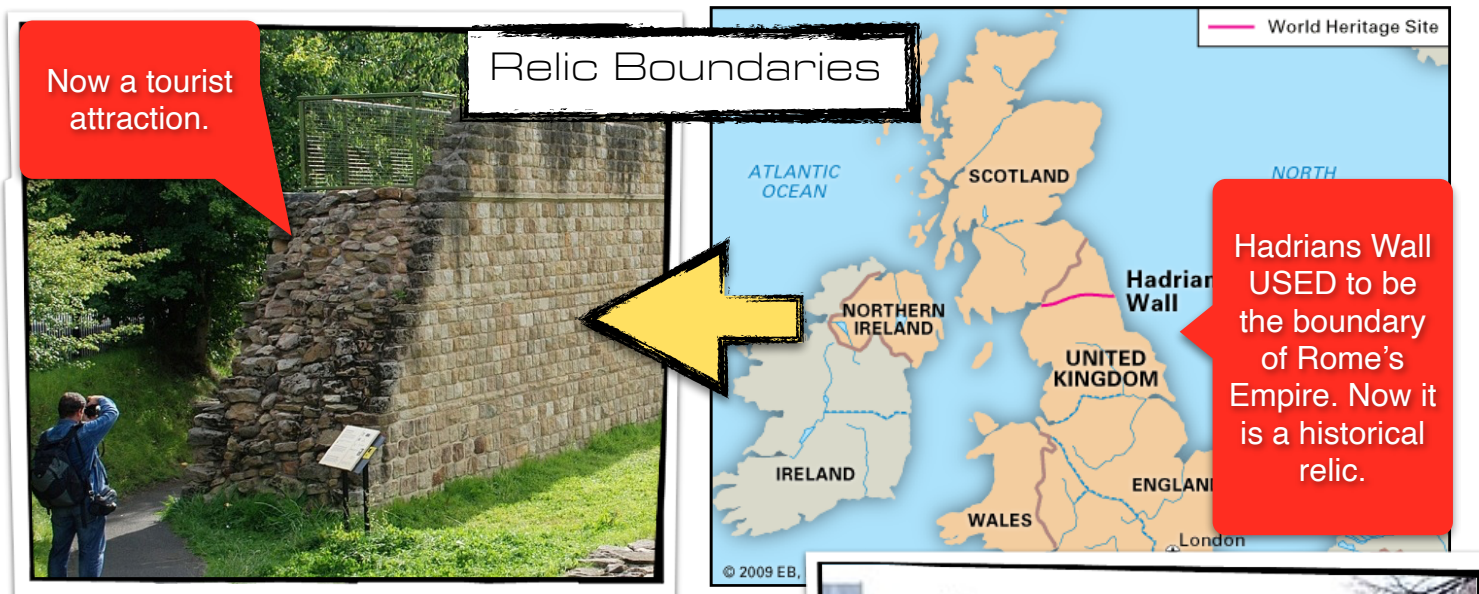
At the heart of modern international political system is the system of states with boundaries. *Boundaries* are the invisible or imaginary borderlines, agreed upon by multiple states, that define the edges of formal political regions. During ancient times, states did not have formal borders. Instead, states had frontiers - a wilderness land that served as a neutral zone between two political entities. The *European Westphalian System* promoted a more clearly defined boundary between states with the hope of avoiding global wars over territory and resources. Boundaries mark the edges of a state's sovereignty and legitimacy, allowing governments to know what is "ours" and what is "theirs." This is especially true for economic reasons of resource extraction, exports, and transportation routes. Boundaries can be tied to national identity and cultural heritage. The Jews and Muslims believe a certain piece of land is Abraham's promised land that is their religious right to possess. The USA's "Manifest Destiny" claimed America's right from "sea to shining sea." In the 21st century, almost all boundaries are the result of a series of compromises amongst neighboring political groups.

Types of Boundaries

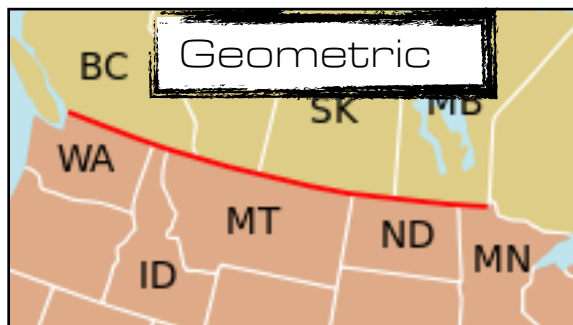
For boundaries to be effective, they need to be clearly defined and demarcated, placing clear limits on the specified territory. Boundaries can be determined through a variety of methods:

- **Natural Boundary.** The oldest and most common type of boundary is the physical landscape. Physical features are permanent, visible, and clearly defined. This includes rivers, lakes, seas, oceans, mountains, and deserts. The Mexico-USA border uses the Rio Grande River as its natural boundary. Most island states use the ocean as a natural boundary. East Coast states use the Appalachian Mountains as a western boundary. Although physical features useful because of the clarity, water and mountain boundaries create the new problem of resource ownership and control: Who controls the water for dams, irrigation, and purification? Who mines the mountains for resources?
- **Antecedent Boundary.** An *antecedent boundary* is a historic boundary tied to the national land ownership that is still in use. These boundaries were established a long time ago, but are still in effect during modern times and tend to follow natural boundaries like rivers, mountains, and deserts. One example is the boundary between Malaysia and Indonesia on the island of Borneo. This boundary was established over a thousand years ago, and the states of Malaysia and Indonesia continue to agree to keep it as their border today.
- **Subsequent Boundary.** A *subsequent boundary* is drawn and made legally binding through political treaties. The two governments meet together to delimit and demarcate the exact spot where each state's sovereignty begins and ends. For example, the boundary between China and Vietnam was established after negotiating the line where sovereignty and legitimacy of the land and resources would be set. In 2017, China and India finalized the agreement of the boundary line in the Himalayan Mountains. They signed a formal treaty and set the terms for roads, rivers, resources, and air space. Meanwhile, Pakistan and India still cannot come to a formal agreement on the shared boundary between Kashmir & Punjab.





- **Consequent Boundary.** *Consequent boundaries* are determined by culture or language. For example, Canada created boundaries for the Nunavut autonomous region based upon the cultural distribution of the Inuit people.
- **Relict (Relic) Boundary.** A relict boundary is a historical boundary of a former state or empire which is no longer used, but is still left as a visible mark on the landscape. An example is Hadrian's Wall in the UK which marked the northern most point of the Roman Empire. While the Roman Empire no longer exists, the wall is a visible feature in the landscape of this historic boundary. Another example is the remains of the Berlin Wall which used to divide Berlin in half, but now serves as symbolic reminder of the Cold War. The Great Wall of China used to be the boundary of the Chinese kingdom, but now it is a relic visited for the sake of tourism.



- **Geometric Boundary.** *Geometric boundaries* are straight lines, primarily using latitude and longitude, to make the border. For example, the border of the USA and Canada is drawn along the 49th degree of latitude. Most of the USA's political regions use geometric boundaries to demarcate formal areas such as Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Kansas, and most regions between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains. Geometric boundaries were heavily utilized by the Europeans during decolonization. As the Europeans decolonized Africa and Asia, they superimposed geometric boundaries on the nations, creating new States that ignored all cultural and national spatial patterns.

Walls & Fences

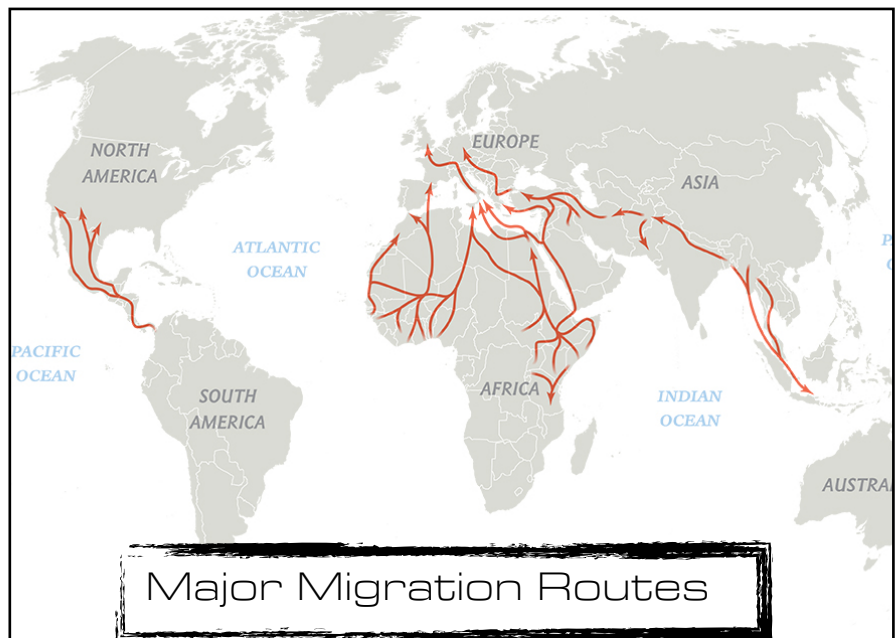
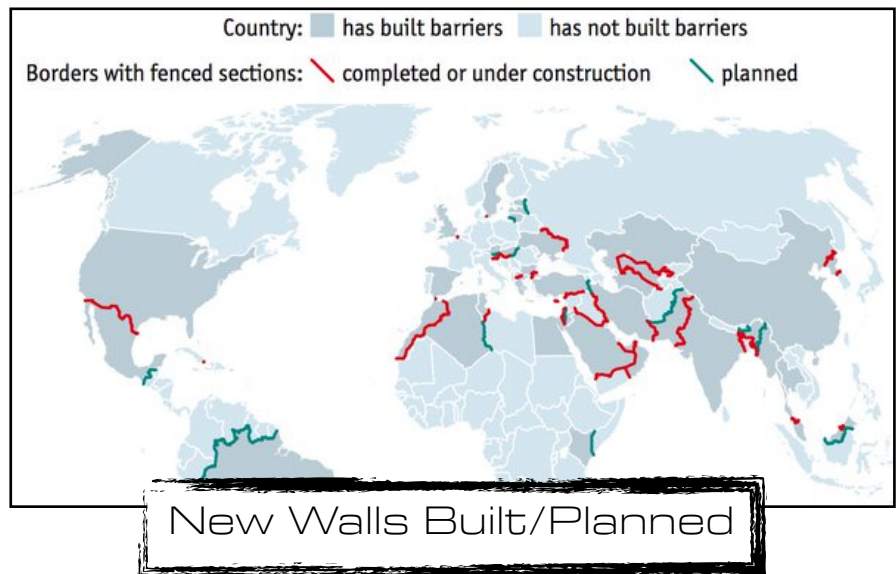
To many states, physical border security is considered critical to their success as a state, leading to the decision to build a wall. Since 1995, the world has seen a rapid increase in the number of border walls being constructed. There were around 20 border walls in 1990, but that number increased to close to 70 walls by 2010.

Walls are built to serve many purposes for a society:

- **Administration.** Walls clearly demarcate the boundary between two states or regions. A wall is visible and clear, making it easier to administer the land, people, and resources on either side of the wall. Walls and fences are also used to mark demilitarized zones. For example, the demilitarized zone between North Korea and South Korea is demarcated by a series of fences.

- **Protection.** Walls historically were used to keep invaders out. While airplanes, cannons, and tanks have made this purpose obsolete, walls are still considered a way to protect people from others with violent intentions. It is also believed that walls will protect people from the spread of disease and from illegal migrants stealing their jobs. While these two ideas may not always be accurate, the perception of a wall's effectiveness leads many to advocate for their construction over other options.
- **Control of Flow.** Paired with the idea of protection, walls can be used to control the flow of immigrants and illegal goods from entering the state. States build *check points*, strategically placed areas where goods and people can flow through under strict supervision. Many governments believe that controlling population flow into the state also controls the violence within the borders (although studies show that, per capita, migrants tend to cause significantly less crimes than citizens). There has been a rapid increase in wall construction as the flow of international migrants and refugees has increased. The Financial Crisis of 2008 along with the Syrian Migration crisis of 2015 has caused societies to rush to build fences and barriers to keep migrants/refugees from pouring into their borders.

On the flip side, walls have also been used to keep people inside the state that the government does not want to emigrate. The Berlin Wall was established by East Berlin to keep East Berliners from emigrating to West Berlin. If a person tried to leave, they would be shot on sight. Similarly, the Israeli Wall along the West Bank and Gaza Strip was built to contain the Palestinian people. The purpose is to mark that land where the Palestinians live, controlling their flow into and out of the rest of Israel.



APPLICATION #1:

Compare the modern migration routes with the modern planned wall constructions. What is the correlation between these two maps?

Consequences of Building Walls

Economic Impacts:

- **Costly.** Walls are expensive to build. The cost of the US/Mexico wall is estimated at \$21.6 billion, PLUS the ongoing cost of \$750 million per year to maintain and staff the wall.
- **Creates Jobs.** Construction jobs are created for those building the wall, along with the mining jobs for the resources. After the wall is finished, jobs are created through patrolling and maintenance works.
- **Loss of Low-Wage Workers.** Employers lose access to low-cost workers. Many farms, landscaping, hotel, and meat packaging companies rely on low cost immigrant labor to fill their job needs. Walls restrict who comes into the country as well as reduces the number willing to come - even via legal guest worker programs.
- **Loss of Money.** The families of the would-be-migrants are economically impacted by a loss of economic opportunity and a loss of remittances from those able to find work on the other side of the wall.



US Mexico Border Wall



Political Impacts:

- **“Protection.”** Societies have a greater sense of security from crime and terrorism. In Israel, the Gaza Wall is justified to limit Palestinian terrorists entering the rest of Israel.
- **Promotes Nationalism.** Walls are built against someone else. This creates an “us-vs-them” mentality, leading to a sense of nationalism or patriotism: “Our land, our people, our protection.”
- **Increased Political Tension.** Building a wall increases feelings of distrust between societies. People build walls because of actions they do not like. The presence of a wall and other defenses serve as a visible reminder of the divide between societies. In the 1980s, Bulgaria built a fence along its border with Turkey which was patrolled by soldiers and covered with over 17,000 land mines.
- **Interferes with Native Lands.** The desire for a wall may be considered more important to the state than the promise of protecting and preserving indigenous lands (or other private property). For example, the US-Mexico wall cuts through indigenous burial grounds and through reservations, prioritizing the state’s desire for exclusion over the historical cultural significance of the land to indigenous groups.



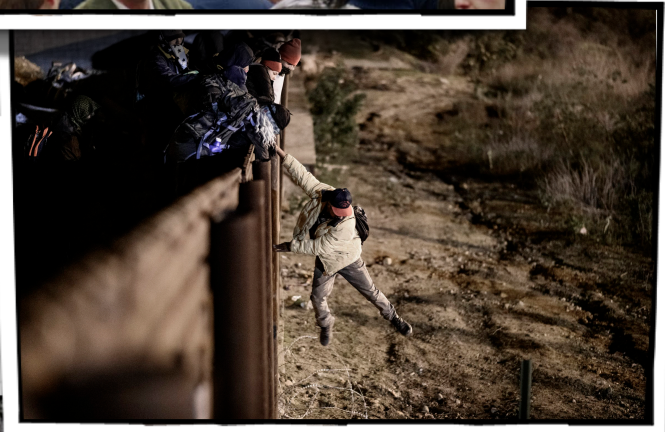
Korean Demilitarized Zone



Hungary-Serbia Fence

Social Impacts:

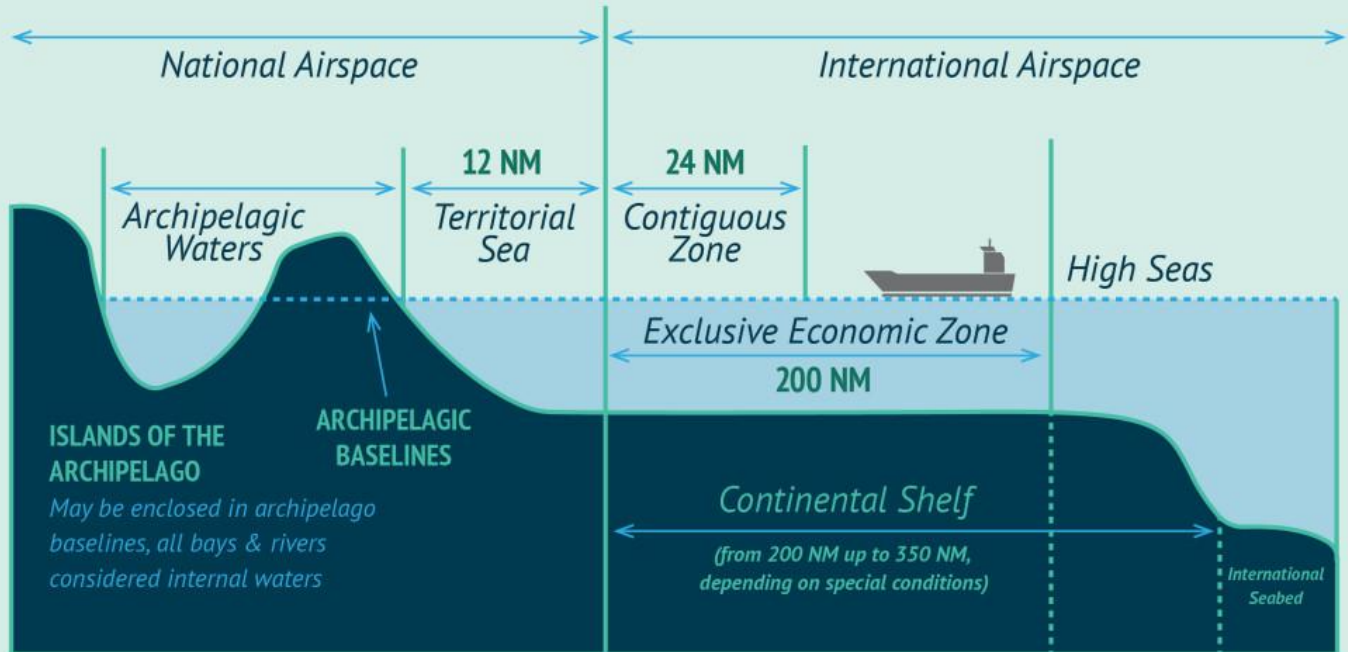
- **Decreased Interaction & Diffusion.** Walls divide societies and limit interaction. Some borders restrict interaction to a few check points while others are meant to completely isolate. Isolation and physical barriers keep ideas, people, goods, and innovations from diffusing.
- **Increased Xenophobia & Stigma.** Many walls are built out of fear and anger toward a particular group of people. This breeds *xenophobia*, or a fear of foreigners. Migrants were already living in that society may face increased harassment, bullying, discrimination, and extra policing based on racial profiling.
- **Separation of Families.** Walls separate families and friends. Some separations are by choice, as when one member of the family purposefully crosses to the other side of the wall for economic opportunity. Others are by force. In Berlin, the wall was constructed overnight, separating families that lived just a few streets away from each other. Some family members did not see each other for 30 years.
- **More Dangerous Routes.** Walls do not stop the flow of migration, they just increase the creativity and risk-taking measures of those wanting to cross. This is especially true when people are in a *forced migration* situation, where their home is unsafe to return to. People build taller ladders, dig deeper tunnels, resort to smuggling, and place themselves and their families into ever more dangerous situations to reach the perceived safety on the other side of the border.



Environmental Impacts

- **Habitat & Migration Disruption.** Walls can go through sensitive environmental areas that harms delicate plant and animal species. Walls can also disrupt animal migration patterns, keeping animals from their natural habitats. This keeps them from important food sources at certain points of the year.
- **Scarred Landscape.** Walls and fences alter the sense of place, creating a scar on the land.

UNCLOS Maritime and Airspace Zones



Source: Batongbacal and Baviera (2013).

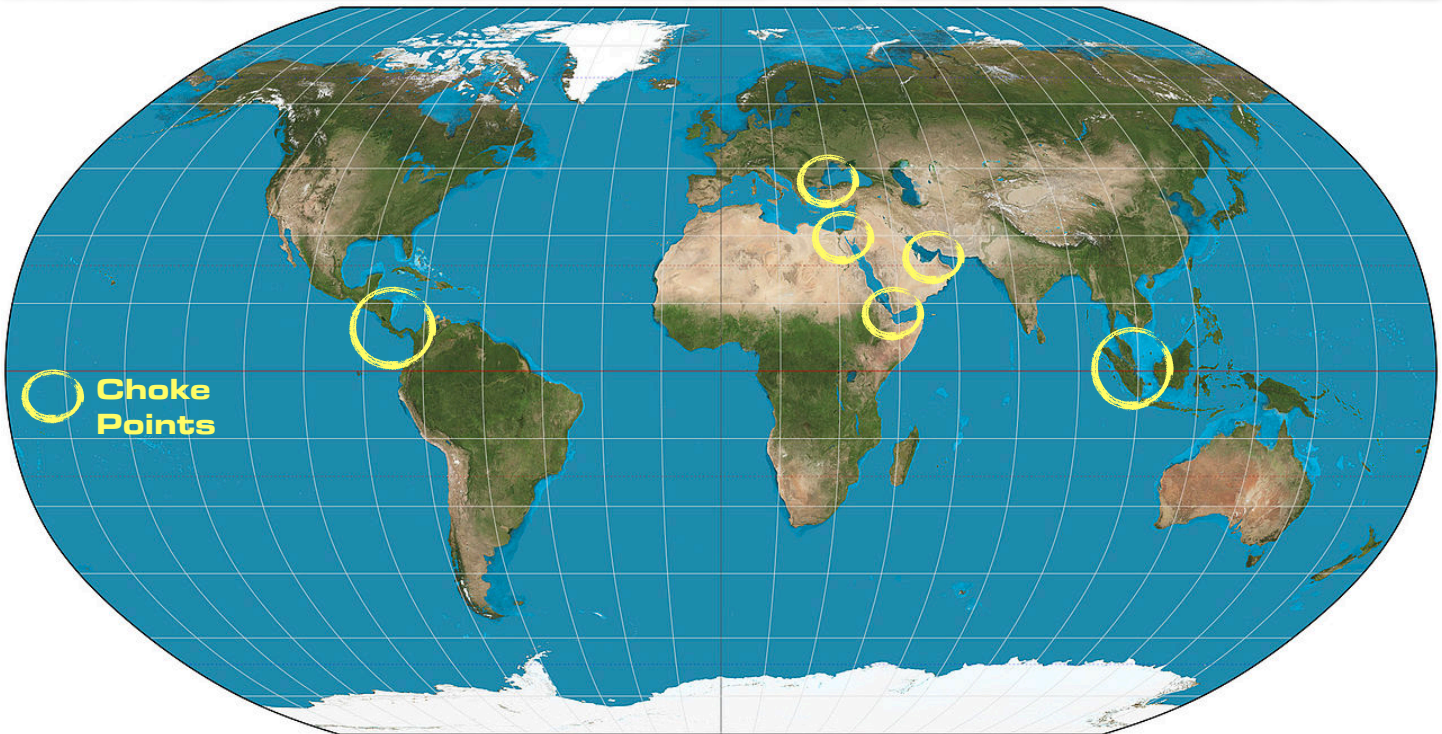
Water Boundaries

Everyone agrees that a person should follow the policies and procedures of a State's government when they are on land, but about when a person goes out to sea? Accord to the 1982 UN Convention for the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), a state's boundary extends beyond the physical land into the ocean or sea. However, the type of control a state can exercise changes based upon the distance from shore:

- **Territorial Waters (Inland & Shallow).** Any inland water and shallow waters along the coast are territorial waters. No foreign ships are allowed into territorial waters. The State has full control over access to territorial waters.
- **Territorial Sea (0-12 miles).** The first 12 miles off of the coast line is the *Territorial Sea*. The State has complete control over this area and all of its resources. No foreign ships are allowed into these waters unless they have permission and comply with *innocent passage*, meaning foreign ships CANNOT carry ANY weapons, spy, or try to fish or extract water resources. The state can profit off of all resources in this area, including fishing and drilling for oil.
- **Contiguous Zone (13-24 miles).** Miles 13 to 24 from the coast line are the *Contiguous Zone*. Foreign ships are allowed to travel through these waters, but must comply with innocent passage (explained above). However, States can still enforce financial, immigration, and sanitary laws on all ships in these waters. The states can still economically profit from this area.
- **Exclusive Economic Zone - EEZ (25-200 miles).** In this *Exclusive Economic Zone*, foreign ships can sail through as long as they are en route to trade, lay cables, pipelines, or other activities that are not harmful to the sea and its resources. However, only the State can explore, use, manage and profit from the natural resources within this 200 mile zone including the water, soil, and anything under the soil.
- **Continental Shelf (201-350 miles).** Any resources located in, or attached to, the continental shelf are considered the rights and opportunity for the State to manage and prosper from. However, if the resources are NOT attached (like fish), anyone can claim them.

APPLICATION #2:

Which States/Regions prosper most from UNCLOS? Which regions have points of conflict with sea sovereignty?

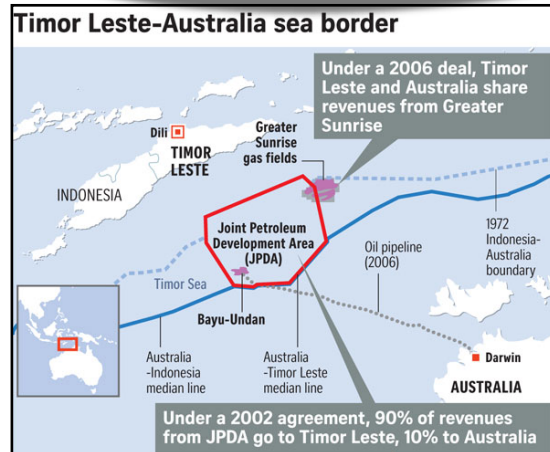
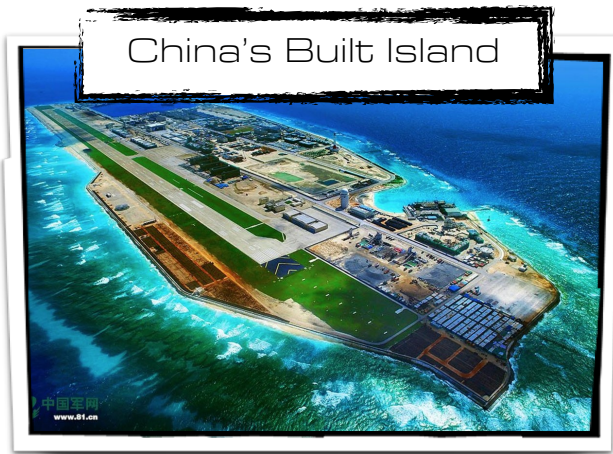


Unfortunately, the open sea (350+ miles off the coast) is not so simple. Certain states exist within 400 miles of the coast of another state. This becomes a point of conflict over who controls the water and resources between the two states. This is especially true around the Horn of Africa, near Saudi Arabia, where there are key choke points to global trade and resources. *Choke points* are passageways controlling the entire flow of trade into and out of a region. Who has sovereignty there? The UN devised the *Median Line Principle*: When less than 400 miles separate two coast lines, they shall divide the water and resources down the middle.

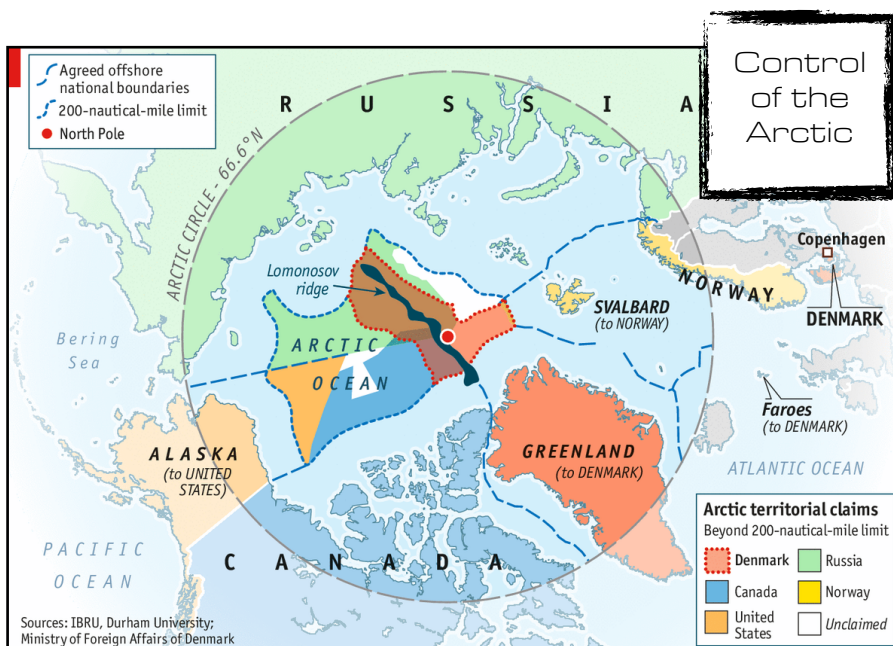
This, however, has not settled all disputes. Water rights have become a strong point of conflict around the world:

- **South China/South Asia Sea.** There are water and island rights being questioned in the South Asia/China sea because China, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam all claim they have fishing, resource, and transportation rights to this water way. China believes they have sovereignty over the largest amount based on antecedent boundaries dating back centuries. The Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam claim sovereignty over the water because of the Law of the Sea Conventions of 1982. As a result, China has built islands with military bases in the South China sea to legitimize their claims to the water rights from mainland China, AND from the 200 miles extending from the newly constructed island's coast.





- **Australia & East Timor.** East Timor was a colony of Portugal and then an autonomous region of Indonesia until around 2000 CE. Indonesia had made a treaty with Australia over the Median Line and water resource rights. Once East Timor gained independence, they claimed those treaties were no longer valid. East Timor was bankrupt and needed financial resources and they looked to the gas and oil reserves in the ocean as a means to increase their exports and work their comparative advantage. East Timor renegotiated with Australia - arguing for the rights to drill the gas and oil fields and to run oil pipelines through Australian water ways. The two states reached agreement when Australia accepted the new water boundaries in exchange for 10% of the oil profits that ran through the oil pipelines.



- **The Arctic Circle.** There has been fierce debate over who can profit from and control the resources in the Arctic Circle. The USA, Canada, Denmark (via Greenland), Norway, and Russia all claim they have economic rights to prosper from the Arctic because of adjacent land masses and ocean territorial rights. The problem, however, is that each state's 200 mile EEZ claim overlaps with that of the other countries. This is especially true of the continental shelves, where the UNCLOS creates more confusion than clarity. Most of the disputes have been resolved through bilateral agreements between States. However, as the Arctic thaws, opening water ways and resources, efforts to secure control the Arctic have increased. Russia has built over 30 military installations in the region compared to the USA's... none.

B. Morphology

Shape

Territorial morphology relates to the size and relative shape of a state's territory. States can be grouped into categories based on geometric features. And while not every state fits neatly into a category, it does provide a basic tool for analyzing territories:

- **Compact States:** The distance from the center of the state to its boundaries in every direction is relatively, but not perfectly, equal. This morphology has the benefit of being easily politically managed. Most states place the capital near the center of the state, allowing government, communication and transportation services to more easily access all regions. Compact states also benefit from relatively a similar climate. Examples include: Poland, France, Belgium, Ethiopia, Colorado, and Wyoming.
- **Elongated States:** The state's shape is very long and relatively narrow. Elongated states have a unique set of struggles because the regions furthest away from each other can become isolated, developing their own unique senses of place, languages, and cultures. If the state is long from north to south, the climates of each region may be very different. For example, in California, the northern area has cool temperatures, plentiful trees, and abundant rain. Meanwhile, the southern tip is a desert. This causes the state to have to accommodate a variety of unique needs. The length also causes political problems. The capital city cannot be centrally located, making access to services difficult, and the government may lose its impact and influence due to distance decay. If the government is not careful, it can "lose touch" with the regions that are farthest away if the citizens feel left out or neglected. Examples include: Chile, Malawi, Italy, Gambia, California, and Florida.
- **Fragmented States:** In this situation, state control includes disconnected regions - typically islands. Fragmentation causes unique governing issues. The geographic isolation results in distinct cultures and languages evolving on each island - which causes difficulties in creating a unified identity. Services are difficult to administer as it is difficult and slow to move people and resources from one island to the next. For example, in the Philippines, nurses travel by boat from island to island, because many citizens cannot afford their own boat. This leads to uneven development and quality of life between islands. Examples include: Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Canada, and USA (think Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico).

Other Categories

States may also be categorized by other factors besides their physical shape:

- **Empire.** An *empire* consists of one state which has conquered and gained sovereignty over other states and nations which do NOT want to be controlled. The *metropole* is the land of the parent state, or leading territory, of the empire. In the empire of the United Kingdom, England is the metropole, with London as its capital city. The laws and policies crafted in the metropole extend out to the controlled lands within the empire; to the extent the ruling population can physically enforce them.
- **Satellite State.** Not all power is gained through physical conquest. A *satellite state*, or client state, is technically independent, but is heavily influenced politically and economically by more powerful states. After WWII, Hitler and the Nazis made building a land empire unpopular. During the Cold War, both the USA and USSR utilized satellite states to spread their influence and policies throughout the world; helping put puppet

Compact



Elongated



Fragmented



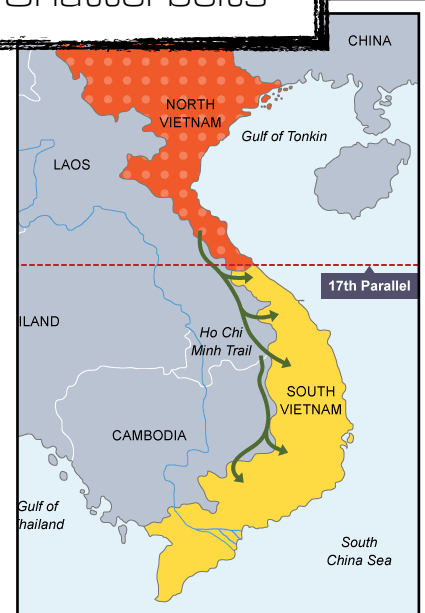
governments into power that would cooperate with the superpower's desired actions.

- **Shatterbelt.** *Shatterbelts* are regions caught between stronger colliding external forces, causing their state to split or remain culturally divided. Vietnam and Korea were both shatter belts in the 1960s-70s. Once, these societies were both whole. However, both Korea and Vietnam became caught in between the USSR and the USA. The result was the division of Korea into the separate countries of North Korea and South Korea. Vietnam followed suit, and was divided into North & South Vietnam until the 1980s when North Vietnam reunified the State.

Regionally, the Caribbean, Central America and Eastern Europe have historically served as a shatterbelt regions. From the 1800s to the 1960s, they were caught between the aggressions of the new USA and the European colonizers who still controlled vast lands in South America. During the Cold War, Eastern Europe and the Middle East served as shatterbelts between the USA/European Capitalists and the USSR. Southeast Asian and Central Asian states currently serve as a shatterbelt between the growing powers of India, China, Russia and the USA.

- **Buffer State.** Similar to a shatterbelt, a *buffer state* is a small state sandwiched between two more powerful states which are often hostile toward each other. The key purpose of a buffer state is to keep a larger conflict between the two states from erupting. Buffer states emerged during colonization, when Europeans wanted to ensure that border tensions between colonists would not cause a global military catastrophe. Typically, these buffer zones were distinct natural barriers like mountains or deserts. Other buffer zones were unruly populations that could not be easily subjugated. Creating a buffer state solved the problem of what to do with said population and created a mutually accepted neutral zone. For example, Afghanistan, whose population has been fiercely uncontrollable since before Alexander the Great, served as a buffer between Great Britain's empire in India and the Russian empire to the north. Similarly, during the 1800s imperialism of Asia - Thailand was setup as a buffer state between France's colonies in Indochina (now known as Vietnam) and British held India (they didn't want to start a world war over land disputes in Asia...) During the Cold War, Poland and most other minor Eastern European states served as buffers between Western Europe and Russia. In a more modern example, during the 1950s, tensions arose between India and China as to the locations of new borders as the states sorted out a decolonized world. The states of Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh were created through superimposed borders to serve as buffer zones between the two states.

- **Landlocked.** Certain states are in a position where they are *landlocked*, with no access to an ocean or a sea. Most landlocked states exist in Eastern Europe and Central Africa as a result of European decolonization and superimposed boundaries. Landlocked states face a significant set of unique challenges, the first of which is the loss of direct trade. Landlocked states have to negotiate trade deals with their neighbors in order to get their goods onto the global market. Land based travel is significantly more expensive than



Landlocked States

The map displays the following landlocked states (highlighted in pink):

- Uzbekistan
- Kazakhstan
- Mongolia
- Turkmenistan
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Kyrgyzstan
- Tajikistan
- Afghanistan
- Nepal
- Laos
- Bhutan
- Central African Republic
- South Sudan
- Ethiopia
- Uganda
- Malawi
- Zimbabwe
- Swaziland
- Lesotho
- Botswana
- Zambia
- Burundi
- Rwanda
- Chad
- Burkina Faso
- Mali
- Niger
- Paraguay
- Bolivia

The map also labels the following oceans:

- North Atlantic Ocean
- South Atlantic Ocean
- Indian Ocean

Case Study: Superimposed Boundaries

12

United Nations Members



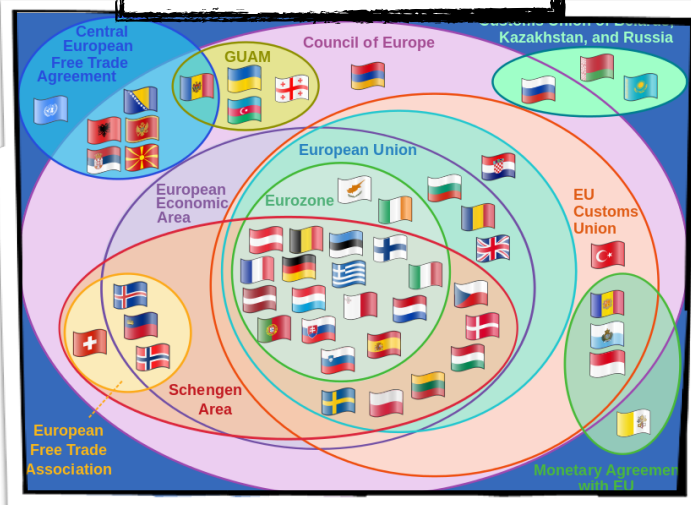
Maybe working together is better than fighting wars?

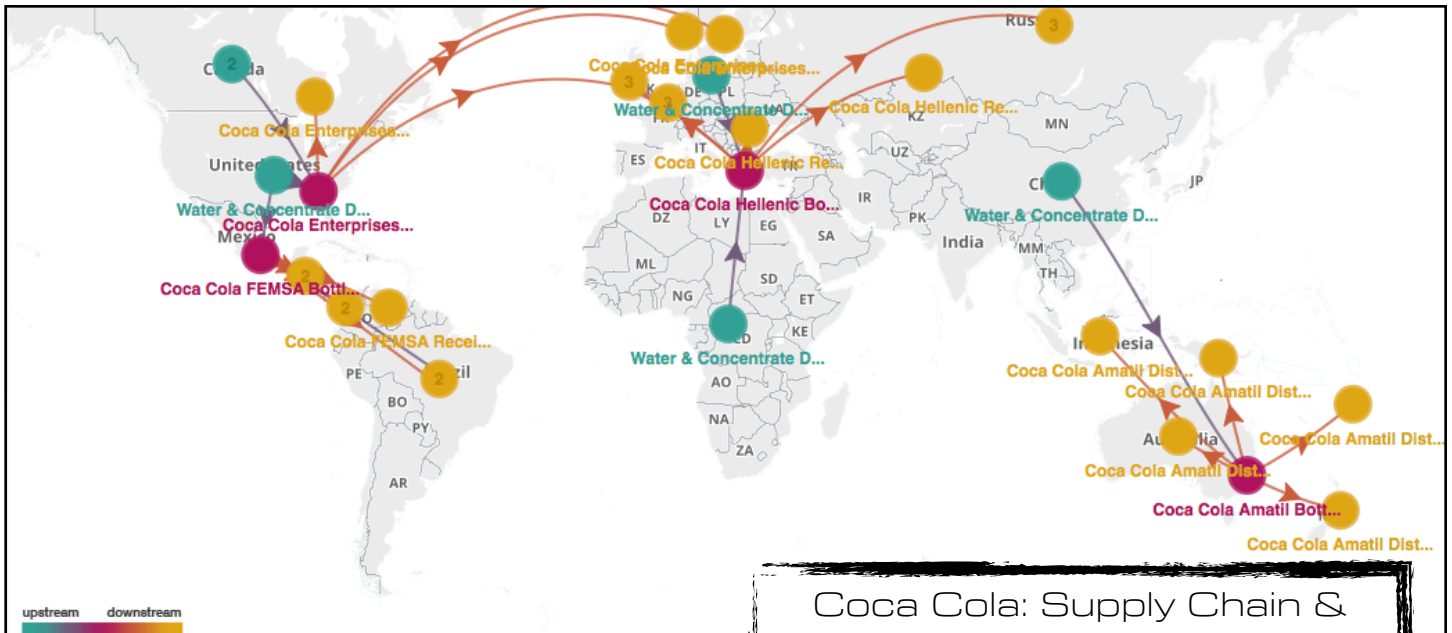


European Union

The causes for forming supranational organizations can be categorized into: *political, economic, military alliance, or environmental*. Depending on the organization, it can be a blend of a federalization of states or a confederation (loose organization) of states.

- **Political.** Certain organization's aims are to make political arrangements and provide resources to keep peace and stability around the world, or in a certain region, while also protecting human rights. One example would be the *United Nations*, which seeks to maintain stability and help vulnerable populations. The *African Union* strives to help all of Africa overcome colonization, bringing unity and stability to the continent.
- **Economic.** Certain organizations aim to improve the economy and increasing trade. This includes organizations which establish trading blocs that remove barriers, such as tariffs and quotas, like NAFTA (now known as USMCA). Others include opening borders, removing migration requirements to allow for the free flow of workers, and sharing a common currency such as the European Union, ASEAN, and the Economic Council of West African States (ECOWAS). States can organize around a resource or means of production, working together to improve their strength in the global market. OPEC organizes oil producing states, helping them work together instead of compete.





Coca Cola: Supply Chain & Distribution Map

For businesses, globalized business opportunities allow them to take advantage of economies of scale. *Economies of scale* is the concept that as the volume of production increases, the cheaper it becomes to mass produce the product or service while receiving greater profit. For example: it is cheaper and more profitable for a phone company to create 2 phones, rather than for them to create only one. It is cheaper and more profitable for a company to make 10 phones instead of 2; 10,000 phones instead of 1,000... etc. When a company is able to serve a global market, encouraged through free trade agreements, businesses can grow to the size that makes their profits enormous. To

illustrate, Coca-Cola uses the exact same amount of equipment for to produce one bottle of Coke as it does to produce 100,000. Because Coke sells their product to a global market, they maximize their investment in their technology production, thus maximizing their profits and minimizing their costs.



- **Security:** Supranational organizations can organize multiple states to provide mutual security through alliances. They pool together military resources and intelligence in order to ensure mutual peace and stability. NATO and the Warsaw Pact were both supranational organizations aimed at organizing military and intelligence agencies to prevent attacks.
- **Environmental Protection.** A growing number of environmental phenomena exist across borders, requiring the action of states working together around the globe. Issues like global warming and climate change have sparked a series of coordinated efforts. In 2016, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) organized 100 states in Paris, France to discuss a plan to fight climate change: investing in new technology while also reducing CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions. The Arctic Council organizes the arctic states and indigenous groups to create plans for sustainable development and environmental protection in the arctic regions.

APPLICATION #3:

Is the cost of giving up sovereignty worth the benefit of joining these Supranational Organizations? Why/Why not?