TISHK International University

FASE | IRD Department

Geopolitics

Chapter :STAGES OF MODERN GEOPOLITICS

Spring Semester

STAGES OF MODERN GEOPOLITICS

- **Modern geopolitics has developed through five stages—**
- **the race for imperial hegemony; German geopolitik;**
- **American geopolitics; the Cold War–state centered versus universalistic geographical;**
- **the post–Cold War period**

THE RACE FOR IMPERIAL HEGEMONY

- the founders of modern geopolitics were Ratzel, Mackinder, Kjellén, Bowman, and Mahan, whose writings reflected their era of intense nationalism, state expansionism, and overseas empire building. The principles and laws of these leading theoreticians reflected their national perspectives and experiences, including command of modes of transportation and communication for world outreach as well as the influence of social Darwinism.

THE RACE FOR IMPERIAL HEGEMONY
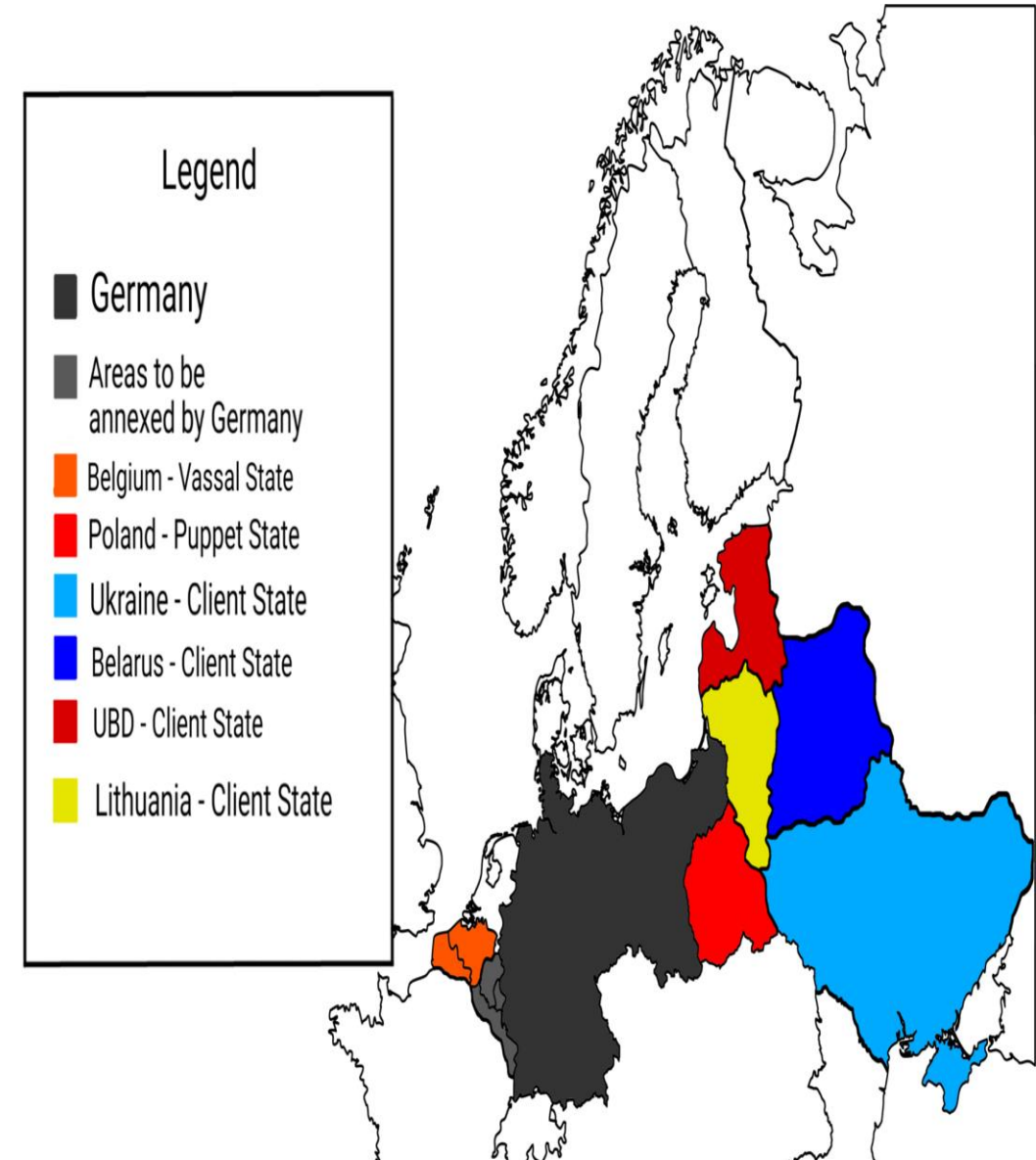## Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904)

- the German "father" of political geography and a natural scientist, was the first to treat **space** and **location** systematically, in his comparative studies of states.

- He provided successor geopoliticians **with a scientific basis for state expansionist doctrines** that reflected Germany's nineteenth-century experiences and its ambitions for the future.

- During the last half of the nineteenth century Germany had emerged as the chief economic and military power on the European continent. Unified under Bismarck's leadership and victorious in its wars with Austria and France, it had enlarged its territory, expanded its heavy industries, and enacted social reform. With the aid of a new, powerful naval fleet, Germany posed a serious threat to Britain and France as it acquired an overseas empire in East and West Africa and the West Pacific and sought commercial footholds in East Asia.
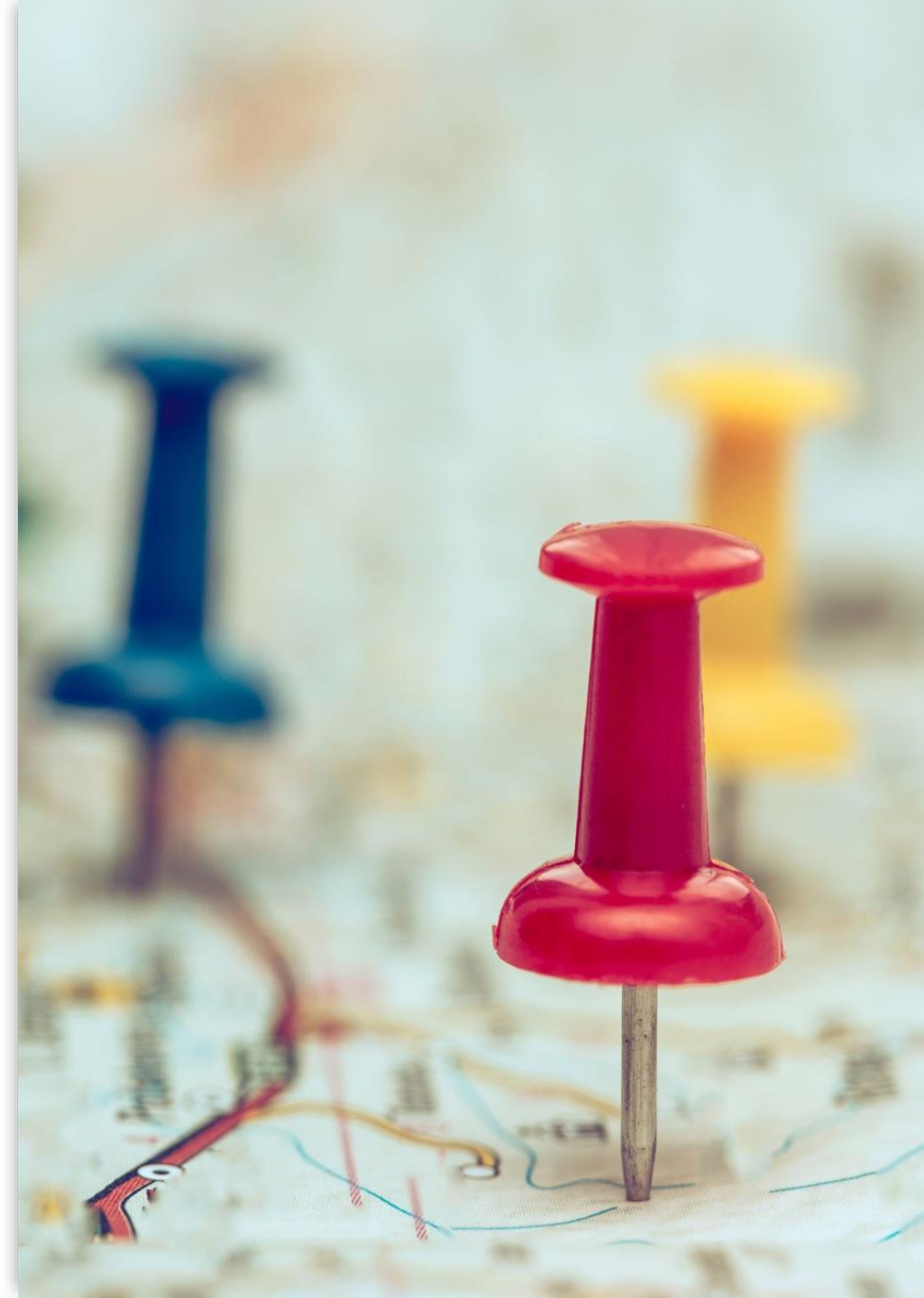
THE RACE FOR IMPERIAL HEGEMONY
Friedrich Ratzel (1844–1904)

- Ratzel believed that a country is like a living organism connected to its land, and its development is influenced by the geographical space it occupies.

- He thought that the characteristics of a nation are shaped by its relationship with the land. Ratzel's ideas focused on two main concepts: **"space"** and **"location"**.

- The space a country occupies is important for its political identity, and its unique location contributes to its distinctiveness. He compared the borders of a country to the skin of a living being, which grows and shrinks.

- Ratzel believed that when countries unite under a single government, they can become very powerful. These ideas were aligned with Germany's vision of itself as a strong, growing, and assertive nation with a capitalist economy.

Legend
- Germany
- Areas to be annexed by Germany
- Belgium - Vassal State
- Poland - Puppet State
- Ukraine - Client State
- Belarus - Client State
- UBD - Client State
- Lithuania - Client State

THE RACE FOR IMPERIAL HEGEMONY

Halford Mackinder (1861–1947)

- His concern was safeguarding the British Empire's political, commercial, and industrial primacy at a time when command of the seas no longer appeared to guarantee world supremacy.

- With the advent of the transcontinental railroad age (the Union Pacific, 1869; Berlin-Baghdad via Anatolia, 1896; and the TransSiberian, 1905), Mackinder viewed the rise of Eurasian continental states as the greatest threat to British world hegemony.

- For Mackinder, geographical realities lay in the advantages of centrality of place and efficient movement of ideas, goods, and people. In 1904, he theorized that the inner area of Eurasia (the great Eurasian lowland), characterized by interior or polar drainage and impenetrable by sea power, was the "pivot area" of world politics

Halford Mackinder (1861–1947)

- This area included basically the forests of Siberia in the north and its steppes of the south, bounded by the deserts and subarid steppes of Turkestan.

- He warned that rule of the heart of the world's greatest landmass could become the basis for world domination owing to the superiority of rail over ships in terms of time and reach. A Eurasian land power (be it Russia, Germany, or even China, and especially an alliance of the first two) that gained control of the pivot area would outflank the maritime world.
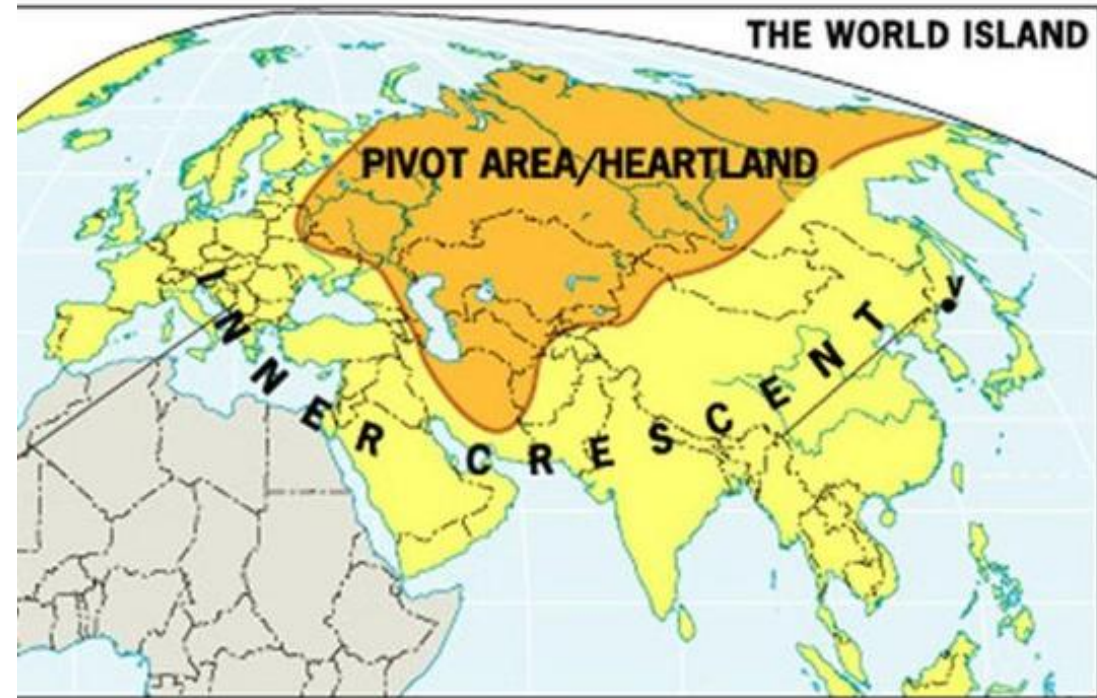
Halford Mackinder (1861–1947)

- Mackinder, now using the term "heartland" and taking into account advances in land transportation, population increases, and industrialization, enlarged his map to include Eastern Europe from the Baltic through the Black Sea as Inner Eurasia's strategic annex.

- This became the basis for his dictum, "Who rules Eastern Europe commands the Heartland: Who rules the Heartland commands WorldIsland: Who rules World-Island commands the world."

- The warning to Western statesmen was clear—the key to world domination lay in the middle tier of German and Slavic states, or Mitteleuropa—a region as accessible to Germans as it was to Russia.

'Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland'
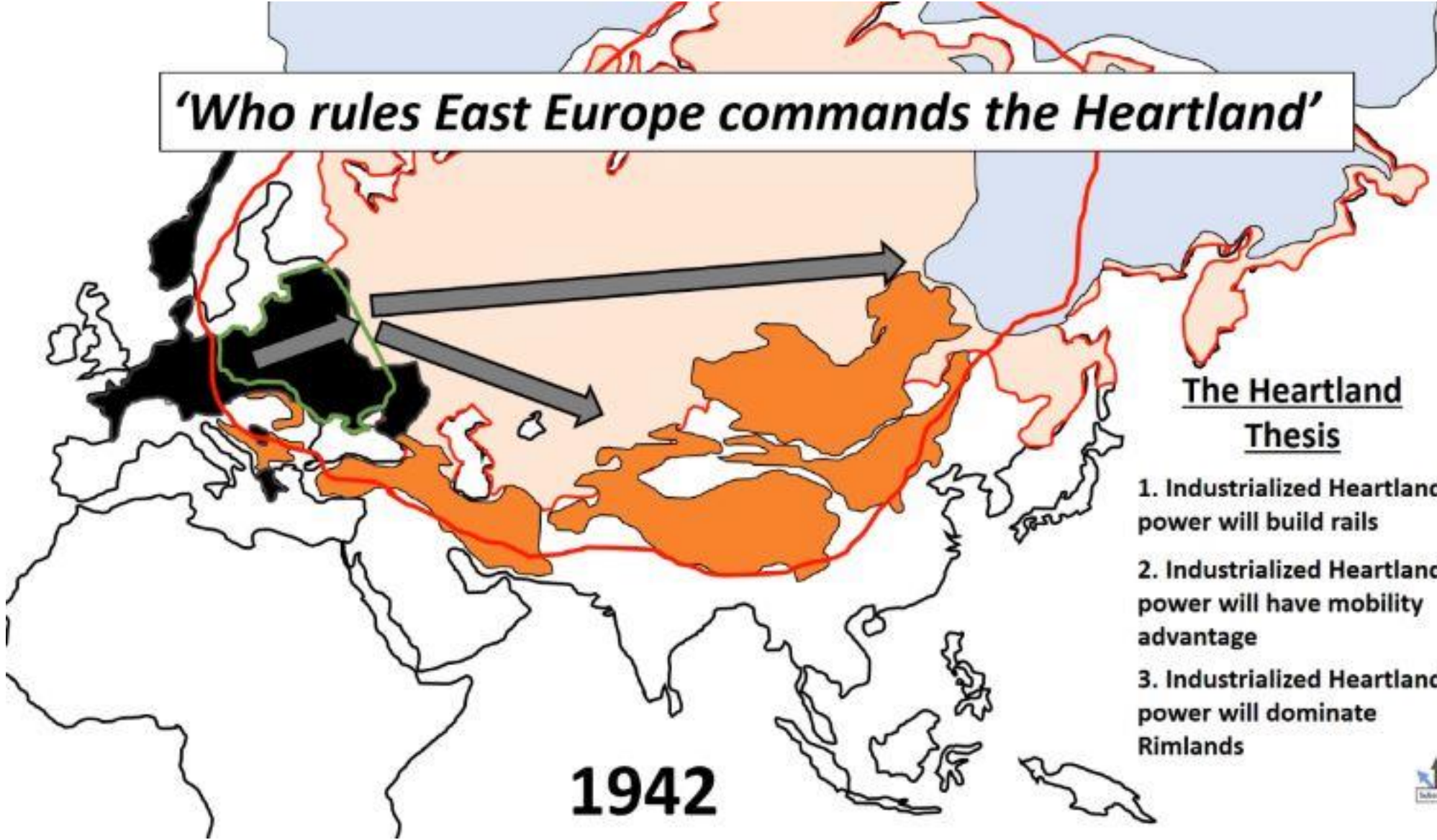
The Heartland Thesis

1. Industrialized Heartland power will build rails

2. Industrialized Heartland power will have mobility advantage

3. Industrialized Heartland power will dominate Rimlands

1942

Admiral Alfred T. Mahan (1849–1914)

- was a naval historian and second president of the United States Naval War College. His global perspective was also Eurasian centered.

- For Mahan, the northern land hemisphere, the far-flung parts of which were linked through the passageways offered by the Panama and Suez Canals, was the key to world power; within that hemisphere, Eurasia was the most important component.

- Mahan recognized Russia as the dominant Asian land power, whose location made it unassailable. However, he felt that Russia's landlocked position put it at a disadvantage because, in his view, sea movement was superior to land movement.

Admiral Alfred T. Mahan (1849–1914)

- Mahan developed his geopolitical views as America's frontier history was drawing to a close and the country had begun to look beyond its continental limits to a new role as a world power.

- He considered the United States to be an outpost of European power and civilization, regarding its Pacific shore and islands to be extensions of the Atlantic-European realm. The United States thus lay within the Western half of a twofold global framework, the Oriental (Asian) being the other half. In many ways, Mahan's view of the world's setting anticipated Mackinder's. Their diametrically opposed strategic conclusions stemmed from different assessments of the comparative effectiveness of land versus sea movement.

Blue water strategy

- Mahan strongly supported US annexation of the Philippines, Hawaii, Guam, and Puerto Rico; control of the Panama Canal Zone; and tutelage over Cuba.

- His writings helped bring an end to American isolationism and were highly influential in shaping US foreign policy during the McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt administrations. Roosevelt, in particular, endorsed the Mahan call for a larger navy as well as his broader geopolitical concepts.
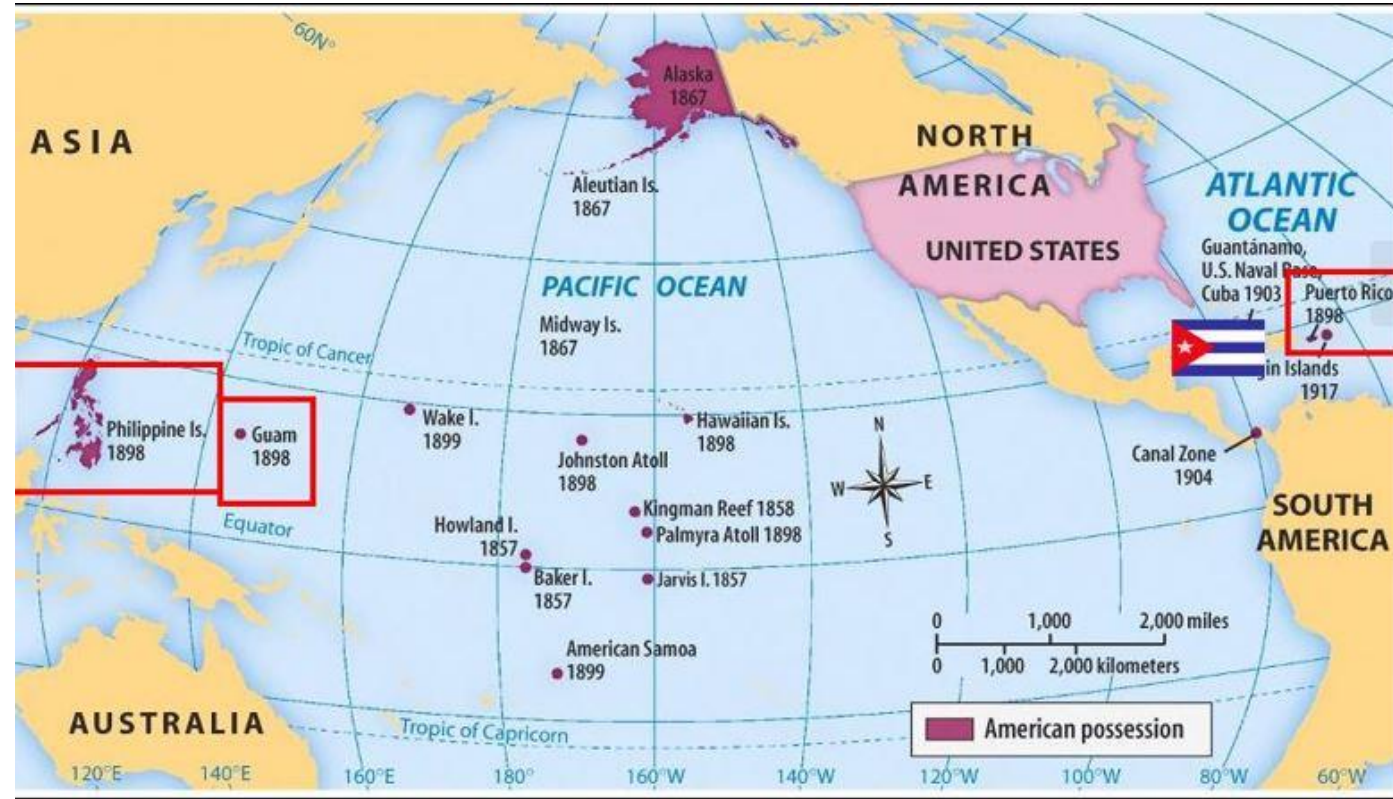
18th-19th century Great Britain

- Control of the sea is key to a nation's political, economic, and military interests Sea power involves:

- Naval power

- Ocean commerce

- Ocean industry

- Large population

Overseas Commerce

- East India Company dominated trade with India, China, and South-East Asia

- Colonial exports accounted for much of Great Britain's wealth

Navy

- The Royal Navy was the most powerful Navy in the world until surpassed by the United States during World War II

Industry

- Population boom as a result of the industrial revolution

- Ability to build a large fleet

German geopolitik

- German geopolitik emerged in reaction to Germany's devastating defeat in World War I. Humbled by the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was stripped of its overseas empire and important parts of its national territory.

- Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France, small border areas were annexed by Belgium, and North Schleswig was returned to Denmark in a plebiscite.

- Historic Prussia was divided. In West Prussia, Poznan (Posen) went to Poland, as did the land that constituted the Polish Corridor. Danzig became a "free city" and, in the easternmost part of East Prussia, the Memel Territory first came under the League of Nations, administered by France, and was then annexed by Lithuania.

Territories Taken Away from Germany by Allies after World War I

Karl Haushofer (1869–1946)

- The organic growth of Germany to its west and east was regarded as inevitable. To gain mastery over World-Island, it was necessary for Germany to dominate the USSR and destroy British sea power. The geopoliticians posited that German control over Pan-Europe (including Eastern Europe) would force the Soviet Union, regarded as an Asian power, to come to terms.

- During most of the 1920s and 1930s, Haushofer espoused continental panregionalism based upon complementarity of resources and peoples: Pan-America, Pan-Eur-Africa, and Pan-Asia, with the United States, Germany, and Japan as respective cores. His position on the USSR was ambiguous.

- He proposed variously a German-Russian alliance, a Pan-Russia-South Asia grouping, and a Japan-China-Russia bloc. His call for Germany, the USSR, and Japan to form a Eurasian panregion that would dominate World-Island influenced the German-Soviet pact of 1939 but was made moot by Hitler's subsequent invasion of the Soviet Union.
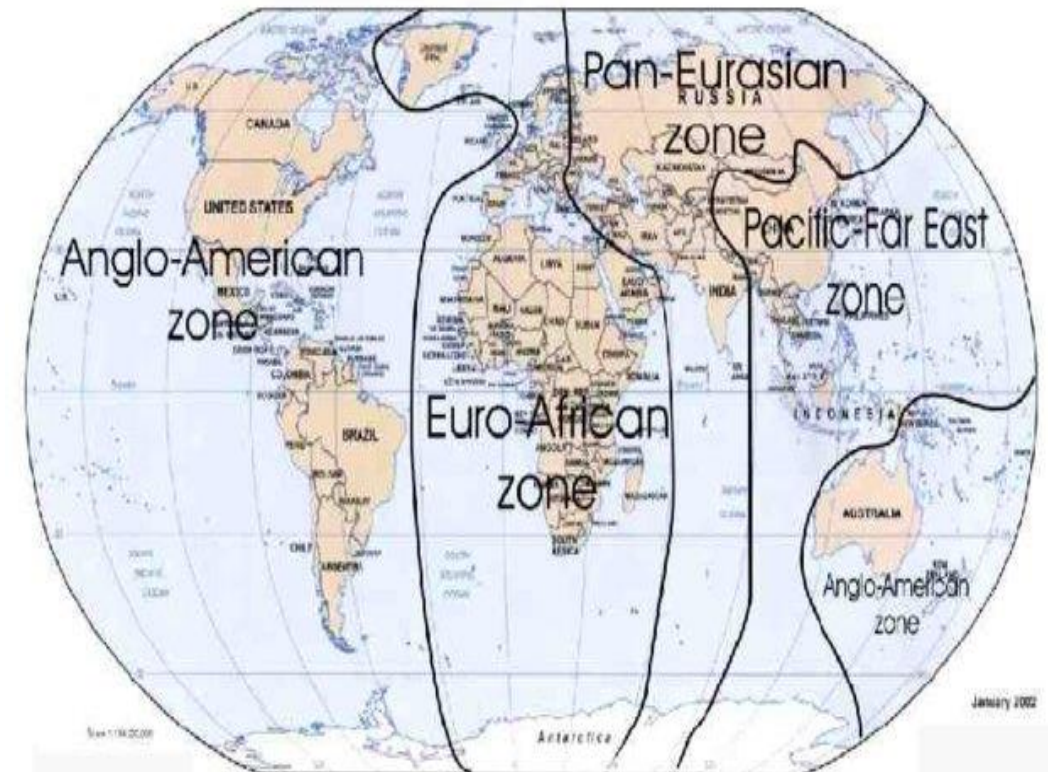
Map of multipolar world. Four zones - four poles

Nicholas Spykman (1942–44) (The Rim land)

- Spykman's terminology, his detailed global geographical setting, and the political conclusions that he derived from his views of the world show that his basic inspiration came from Mackinder, whose strategic conclusions he attempted to refute.

- Essentially, Spykman sought to arouse the United States against the danger of world domination by Germany.

- He felt that only a dedicated alliance of Anglo-American sea power and Soviet land power could prevent Germany from seizing control of all the Eurasian shorelines and thereby gaining domination over World-Island.

Nicholas Spykman (1942–44) (The Rim land)

- Spykman considered that the Eurasian coastal lands (including maritime Europe, the Middle East, India, Southeast Asia, and China) were the keys to world control because of their populations, their rich resources, and their use of interior sea-lanes.

- In essence, Spykman had the same global view as Mackinder, but he rejected the **landpower** doctrine to say, "Who controls the rimland rules Eurasia; who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world."

- To Spykman, the rimland (Mackinder's "Marginal Crescent") was the key to the struggle for the world. In the past, the fragmentation of the Western European portion of rimland and the power of the United Kingdom and the United States (parts of what Spykman considered the offshore continents and islands) had made unitary control of the rimland impossible
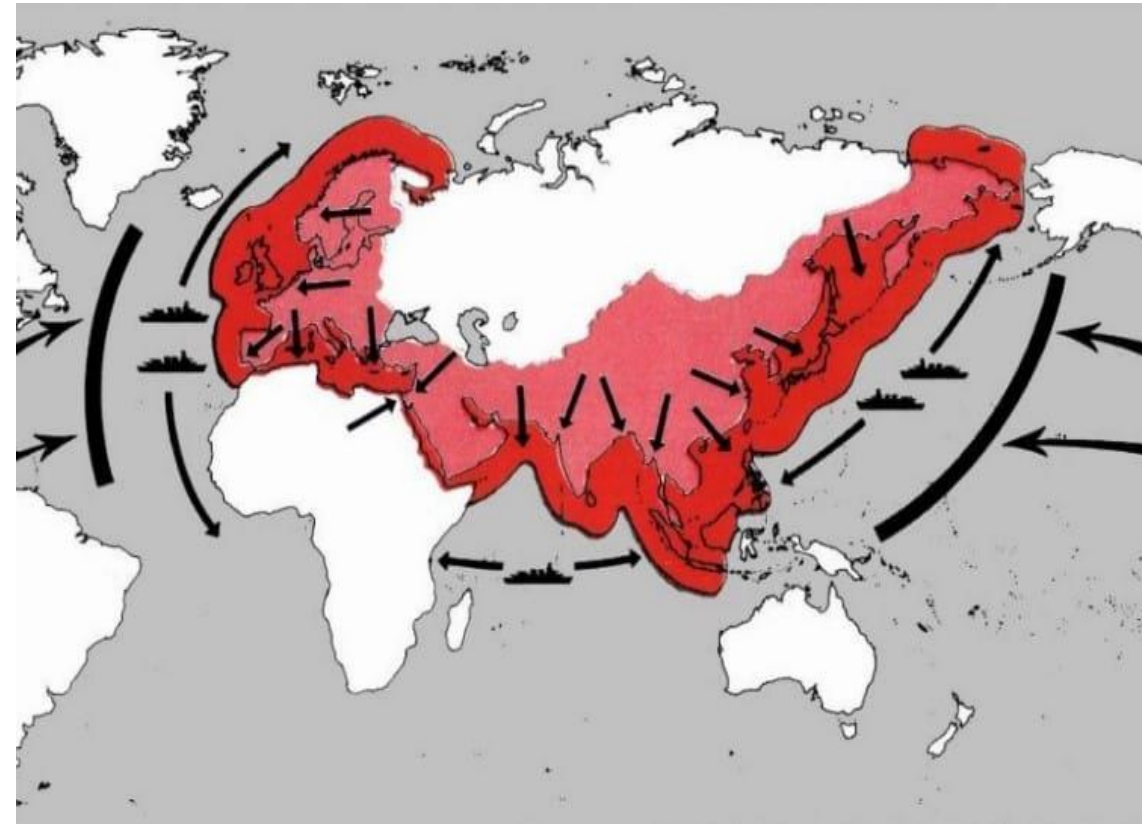
POST–COLD WAR ERA: COMPETITION OR ACCOMMODATION?

- The end of the Cold War era has generated a number of new approaches to geopolitics. For Francis Fukuyama, the passing of Marxism-Leninism and the triumph of Western liberal democracy and "free marketism" portended a universal, homogeneous state. In this idealized worldview, geographical differences, and therefore geopolitics, have little role to play. Fukuyama has more recently theorized that for the next couple of decades, authoritarianism will become stronger in much of the world, especially Russia and China, and that the United States cannot do much to arrest it

post–Cold War geopolitics

- For others, the end of the Cold War has heralded a "new world order" and the geopolitics of US global hegemony. President George H. W. Bush, addressing Congress in 1990, defined the policy behind the war against Iraq as envisaging a new world order led by the United States and "freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace, a world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice.

- None of these scenarios has come to pass. In most cases, the overthrow of Communist regimes has not led to stable, free-market economies.

- The restraints upon the unilateral application of US military, economic, and political power are evident from the failures to gain US objectives in Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Haiti, while a geopolitics of chaos gives inadequate attention to the systemic regional and global forces that keep turbulence in check and absorb its positive aspects into the system.

The main thrust of post–Cold War geopolitics

- Political geopoliticians advocate projection of Western power into Central and Eastern Europe to weaken Russia's heartland position at its western edge. They also advance strategies for penetrating the Caucasus and Central Asia and for playing China off against Russia.

- Brzezinski's prescription for maintaining US global hegemony is to achieve primacy in three parts of the "Eurasian chessboard": the West, or **Europe**; the South, or the **Middle East** and **Central Asia**; and the East, or China and **Japan**.

- To this end, he advocates pulling Ukraine and the Black Sea into the Western orbit, strong US engagement in Central Asia and the Caucasus (described as "the Eurasian Balkans"), and support of China's aspirations for regional dominance in peninsular Southeast Asia and Pakistan.

- Despite its expanded influences, China would still be limited to regional power status by the globally framed US-Japan strategic alliance. The objective is to prevent Russia from reasserting strategic control over "near abroad" states or from joining with China and Iran in a Eurasian anti-US coalition.

Brzezinski's Strategy

The Eurasian Chessboard

WEST · MIDDLE SPACE · SOUTH · EAST

Eurasian Balkans

Zone of Percolating Violence
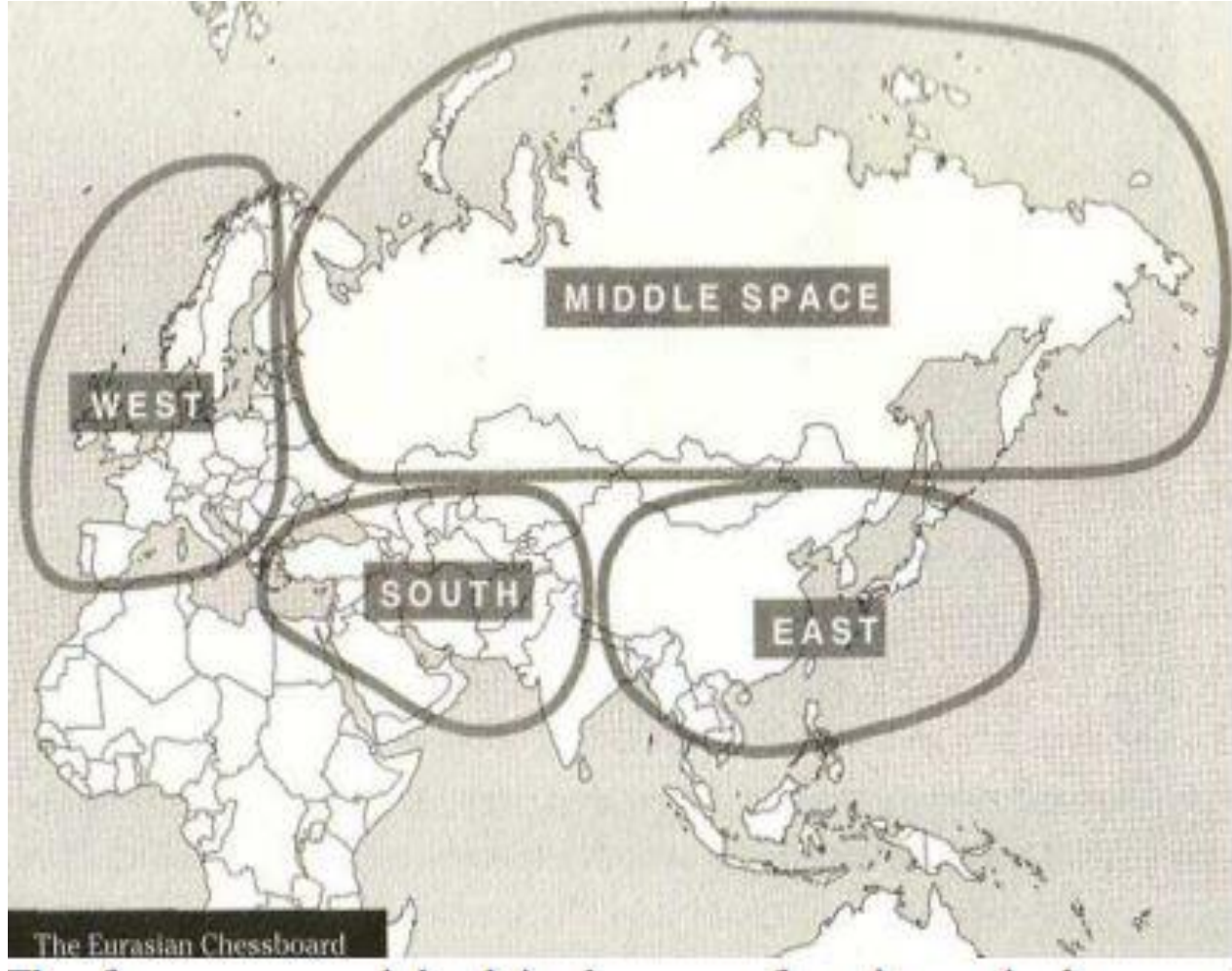
The Bush Doctrine

- The "Bush Doctrine" refers to a set of foreign policy principles and strategies associated with the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush. The doctrine emerged in the early 2000s, particularly in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States.

- Bush's moral simplicity has helped him ease the American transition from the targeted war on international terrorist networks to the much broader confrontation with what he calls the 'axis of evil' and other so-called 'evildoers.'

- The Bush administration's assertion of a right to flex its offensive military muscle against so-called rogue states via pre-emptive force and preventive war is both a political response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and consistent with the history of active U.S. interventionism. But while offensive force is certainly not a new development or concept, its expression in the form of a very public national security doctrine and the President's claim of a moral right to preempt or prevent threats is a highly expansive interpretation of that history.

Key elements of the Bush Doctrine

1. **Preventive War/Preemption:** The doctrine argued for a shift from the traditional concept of responding to imminent threats to allowing preemptive military action to prevent potential future threats. This was a significant departure from past U.S. foreign policy.

2. **Promotion of Democracy:** The Bush administration emphasized the promotion of democracy and the spread of freedom as a means of enhancing global security. The belief was that democracies are less likely to support terrorism and aggression.

3. **Global War on Terror:** The Bush Doctrine declared a "Global War on Terror" and outlined the United States' commitment to combating terrorism worldwide. This included both military actions and diplomatic efforts to build international coalitions against terrorist organizations.

4. **Axis of Evil:** In his 2002 State of the Union address, President Bush referred to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as an "Axis of Evil" due to their alleged pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and support for terrorism.

5. **Unilateralism:** The Bush Doctrine was criticized for its emphasis on unilateralism, as the administration was willing to take military action without broad international support, particularly in the case of the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Serbia - Kosovo (1999):

- While the Kosovo War occurred during the presidency of Bill Clinton, it is worth noting that the NATO military intervention in Kosovo took place in 1999.

- The NATO intervention, known as Operation Allied Force, was conducted without explicit authorization from the United Nations Security Council. It was undertaken to stop the ethnic cleansing and violence perpetrated by Yugoslav forces, led by President Slobodan Milosevic, against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo.

- The intervention was a multilateral effort, with NATO countries participating in the airstrikes against Yugoslav targets. While not under the explicit framework of the Bush Doctrine, it set a precedent for humanitarian interventions without UN Security Council authorization.

Afghanistan (2001-2021):

- The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 was a direct response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States.

- The Bush administration, as part of its response to the attacks, initiated Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001. The primary objective was to dismantle the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, which had provided a safe haven for the Al-Qaeda terrorist network responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

- The invasion of Afghanistan had broader international support compared to the Iraq War. The United States received assistance from NATO allies and other countries in the campaign to oust the Taliban and target Al-Qaeda.

Invasion of Iraq (2003)

- The most notable and controversial unilateral military decision under the Bush Doctrine was the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

- The United States, along with a coalition of a few allies, launched military operations against Iraq, citing concerns about weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and the alleged links between Saddam Hussein's regime and terrorist organizations.

- The decision to invade Iraq was made without explicit authorization from the United Nations Security Council and faced significant international opposition.