

Syllabus

Geopolitics in Asia

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1| Abstract

Working within an international environment forces future managers to cope more and more with geopolitical issues. International managers have to deal with political bodies (on a national or supra-national level) because they have to answer public tenders, because they have to lobby actively with political parties for the sake of their companies, because they have to deal with partners which belong to the State, because public regulation is sometimes more important than competition pressure or consumer needs and wants... Very often international managers have to deal with decision makers who do not have management academic background but a political one, and misunderstandings between them are quite deep. Finally, because of their nationality, or the nationality of their companies, international managers also face problems such as national unrests, political boycotts, religious intolerance... Managers are not prepared for all these issues and a geopolitical approach is very helpful because it gives them a set of tools permitting them to apprehend complex political situations they will be exposed to.

The situation in Asia is without any doubt the most challenging one for western managers, because the political importance of the continent does not match its economic strength. This in turn leads to frustrations and constant demands from Asian countries to upgrade their position on the international level. For instance, Japan and India are not permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. This is an aberration considering their economic and demographic importance. Indonesia on the other side is the biggest Islamic country and it does not have adequate representation in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Political interference in Asia is much bigger than in western countries. This is obviously the case in North Korea, China, Vietnam and Laos where communist parties still rule the countries (with different practices though), or in Myanmar with a transitional regime but also in India where the public sector is still very strong. Generally speaking, Asian countries tend to practice some paternalistic way of governing and international managers have to cope with that.

Finally and contrary to the situation in Western countries, political disputes are still strong in Asia. We still have an open war in Afghanistan, an undeclared war in Pakistan, contested territories as in Kashmir, frequent unrests in Aceh (Indonesia), Mindanao (Philippines) or Thailand and the legacy of the past, especially of the WWII, is still poisoning relationships between Japan and other countries, namely China and South Korea.

The objective of this course is to give students a comprehensive whole of concepts helping them to understand political challenges in Asia. These concepts are used to analyse how international conflicts and territorial claims are backed by historical, national and religious justifications. This course is intended to make you think out of the box, and abandon for a while a managerial approach in order to adopt a political one.

2| Objectives & Learning Goals

Learning Goal 1

Participants will learn about the main theories in geopolitics. These theories have originated in Europe or in the United States, so they are western-centered theories. The challenge is to see if Asian countries have to adapt these theories to their situation, or if they have to invent a complete set of new theories. This concerns human rights, the dichotomy soft-power/hard-power but also economic issues. Participants will benefit from these discussions because the main multilateral economic organizations are also western-centered (International Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, World Bank...). Using an analogy, if a certain attitude (positive or negative) is adopted for geopolitical issues concerning western-centered concepts, we can reasonably expect that the same attitude would be adopted for economic bodies and concepts. This in turn will affect the environment for companies.

Learning Goal 2

Geopolitical issues usually concern territorial disputes and the whole talk is to know how these disputes are going to be solved (using force, consensus or imagination). Corporate strategy also talks about territories to conquer (winning new markets, new segments, market-shares) and the methods used mainly come from geopolitics, in that sense military strategy and tactics. If an Asian company evolves in an environment filled with territorial disputes, it will be more prone to adopt an aggressive strategy rather than a win-win one. Participants will benefit from these discussions because they will learn about a general pattern of thinking about what is a market or a territory, what is a competitor or an enemy and what are the usual and acceptable methods employed by companies in Asia. Knowing how your enemy or a competitor thinks would help participants to deploy the most efficient strategy in return.

3| Methodology

The objective will be achieved through lectures, case studies, class discussions and group work. Lectures and readings will develop the main theories while class discussion will refer to the rich background of classmates. Finally, case studies and group work will permit participants to focus on real cases and propose relevant ways how to settle them.

4| Evaluation and grading

Requirements	Points
Class participation and attendance	10
Group work	30
Final exam	60

a/ Class participation and attendance: By design, much of the learning in this course takes place in the classroom through interaction with other students and class activities. Obviously, students cannot participate unless present in class. Every absence is a missed opportunity to learn and to contribute to the learning of others. It is essential that you prepare thoroughly and contribute responsibly. Quality of class contribution is, of course, more important than quantity.

b/ Group work: One out-of-class homework assignments will be given during the semester. You will work in groups and it will consist in the presentation of an issue I will assign you. Previous groups worked on issues such as:

- Geopolitics, ecopolitics, demopolitics (Kjellen's theory) applied to Asia
- "Natural" vs "political frontiers in Asia
- Geography and politics: the case of the Himalayas
- WW II and its legacy in Asia
- Right of self-determination: case of Aceh and Tibet
- Indigenous groups and their rights: the case of bumiputera
- Christian proselytism in Asia
- Dar ul-Kufr and Dar ul-Islam in Asia

These presentations are made in class (15minutes) using PowerPoint and a written work (10 pages + appendices) is given the day you are making presentations. Once decided, teams and assignments cannot be changed without my consultation.. Please bring your slides in a memory stick.

c/ Final exam. This will be an individual exam. It will test your comprehension of the discussions in class. You will be asked to read and answer questions about a case study and lectures seen in class. *The final exam accounts for 60% of your grade.*

5| Outline

<p>Session 1</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>Introduction, Definition (conflicting heritage for the term geopolitics), conceptualists (Kjellen, Ratzel, Haushofer, Huntington), approach (international relations or contextual analysis).</p>	<p>Session 2</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>Geography and geopolitics in Asia: topography, borders separating sovereignties, homogeneity of a state territory, new frontiers</p>
<p>Session 3</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>History and geopolitics (I) History as a blue-print for present-day politics in Asia (myths and legends, permanent friendship or permanent enemies), historical right of primacy (ethnogenesis, first organizations)</p>	<p>Session 4</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>History and geopolitics (II) Historical right of permanence in Asia (reference to the glorious past, reference to the colonial period) Specificity of history under communist rule (historical materialism, proletarian internationalism)</p>
<p>Session 5</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>National disputes and politics in Asia (I): Definitions (nation, national minority, ethnic group, tribe), self-determination (referendum, space limits, temporal limits)</p>	<p>Session 6</p> <p>Topic</p> <p>National disputes and politics in Asia (II): Autonomies for minorities (economic autonomy, political autonomy, cultural autonomy), conflicting estimates for minority populations, manipulation of the census of population</p>

Session 7	Session 8
<p>Topic</p> <p>Religious disputes and politics (I): Religion and state relationship in Asia: theocracy, autocephaly, caesaropapism, secularism, dominant and minority religions</p>	<p>Topic</p> <p>Group presentations</p>
Session 9	Session 10
<p>Topic</p> <p>Religious disputes and politics (II): Religions and nation relationship in Asia: national and universal religions, zealots and phyletism. New spiritual movements.</p>	<p>Topic</p> <p>Final Exam</p>

6| Bibliography

Mandatory reading(s)

Fukuyama F. (2006) “*The End of History and the Last Man*”, New York: Free Press
Huntington S. (1998) “*The Clash of Civilizations, the Remaking of the World Order*”, New York: Simon & Schuster

Complementary reading(s)

Blondel J. and Inoguchi T. (2009) “*Political Cultures in Asia and Europe: Citizens, States and Societal Values*” London: Routledge
Brzezinsky Z. (1998), “*The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*” New York: Basic Books
Brzezinsky Z. (2005), “*The Choice, Global Domination or Global Leadership*”, New York: Basic Books
Dunne T., Kurki M. and Smith S. (2010) “*International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*” Oxford: Oxford University Press
Gaddis J.L. (2005) “*Strategies of Containment*”, Oxford: Oxford University Press
Gupta A.K. and Wang H. (2009) “*Getting China and India Right*”, Hoboken: Jossey-Bass
Kagan R. (2009) “*The Return of History and the End of Dreams*”, London: Vintage
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Kissinger H. (1995), “*Diplomacy*”, New York: Simon & Schuster
Morris I. (2010), “*Why the West Rules--for Now: The Patterns of History, and What They Reveal About the Future*”, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux
Mullaney T. (2010) “*Coming to terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China*”, Berkeley: University of California Press
Phadnis U. (2001), “*Ethnicity and Nation-building in South Asia*”, Teller Road: SAGE publications
Yoshihara T. and Holmes J. (2010) “*Red Star over the Pacific: China's Rise and the Challenge to U.S. Maritime Strategy*”, Annapolis: Naval Institute Press
Zakaria F. (2009) “*The Post-American World*”, New York: W.W. Norton and Company

APPENDIX| Mini CV



Cedomir NESTOROVIC - French / Serbian

Teaching Professor

Joined ESSEC in 1997

PhD from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris

Cedomir Nestorovic teaches Geopolitics and International Marketing in the BBA program, Islam and Marketing in the MBA program and he is the academic co-director of the MBA at the Arabian Gulf University, Manama, Bahrain. His research focus is on Central and Eastern European countries on one side and issues dealing with Islam and Management on the other side. Cedomir authored *Marketing in Central Europe* (1997) and *Marketing in an Islamic Environment* (2009) and *Marketing Islamico* in 2010. He has been a Visiting Professor at University of Malaya (2009) and he gave lectures at the University Putra Malaysia, University of Teheran, Kuwait University and University of United Arab Emirates on Islam and Marketing. He has been a panelist at the World Halal Forum (2008-2009-2010) in Kuala Lumpur, Sarajevo and Den Haag. He is member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Islamic Marketing* and participates in conferences on halal food management organized by USAID and The World Bank. Cedomir regularly acts as an expert consultant to companies such as Delphi (USA), Groupama, SEB (France), Danone (Singapore). In 2012, he was recognized as the "Professor of the Week" for Islamic Finance by The Financial Times. He is currently the Director of the ESSEC Executive MBA Asia Pacific in Singapore.