

Edexcel Geography A-level

Superpowers

Detailed Notes



Superpower Theory

A **superpower** is a **nation** which has the ability to project its influence around the world. This global influence means they have a big say in decision making and they are often a global force for change. The **four pillars** of Superpower status are:

- **Economic** – A large economy enables a nation to control trade. They can also use their money to invest in a strong military force and exploit natural resources. They may also own the debt of other nations thereby having power over them.
- **Military** – A nation can use their military to threaten or invade other countries (hard power) or to achieve geo-political goals (such as UN Peacekeeping Missions).
- **Political & Ideology** – The ability to influence other countries in a way which suits their desires or match their political systems. Ideology is closely linked with politics, as many states may force their ideology through policies.
- **Cultural** – Projecting a nation's cultural values on others can change the way other populations think and align their ideology with the superpower's culture. Culture is often spread via social media, films, music, food, art etc. The **westernisation** of culture is an important aspect of power.

Another factor which a nation can use to exercise their superpower status is **resources**.

- **Physical resources** like oil and gas (if a nation has the means to exploit them) can help a nation develop their economy and therefore their economic power through trade. If these countries are dependent on the superpower for their natural resources then the superpower will have power over them e.g. Russia providing gas to Europe.
- **Human resources** – A large human workforce if utilised properly can help to develop a nation's economy. For example, the emerging superpowers China and India both have large populations which are being used in manufacturing to develop their economies.

Many would consider the **current global superpower as the USA**, closely followed by the EU. However, this hasn't always been the case. There are many theories and ideas trying to explain why different powers occur at different times:

The Power Spectrum

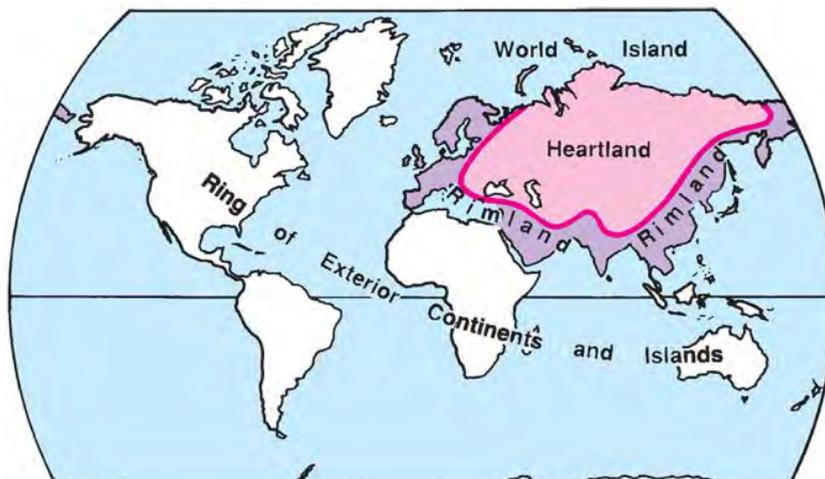
The Power Spectrum describes the different approaches a country may have in influencing their power or culture on another.

| The Power Spectrum | |
|--|---|
| Hard power | Soft power |
| Using military and direct political intervention to change or influence the behaviour of other countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military action • Threat of trade restrictions (embargos) • Use of economic sanctions to damage a nation's economy • Owning the debt of other countries | Attracting national governments and individuals to their country through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive culture & lifestyle • Sought-after political advice • Foreign policies that encourage migration • Trade alliances • Foreign direct investment in business, infrastructure or facilities |



Mackinder's Geo-Strategic Location Theory

The British geographer **Mackinder** classified a region of Eurasia as **the 'Heartland'**. This area stretches from Russia to China and from the Arctic to the Himalayas.



He argued that the Heartland was a **geo-strategic location** because whoever controlled it would control large amount of **physical** and **human resources**.

The theory was influential because it contributed to **policies of containment**:

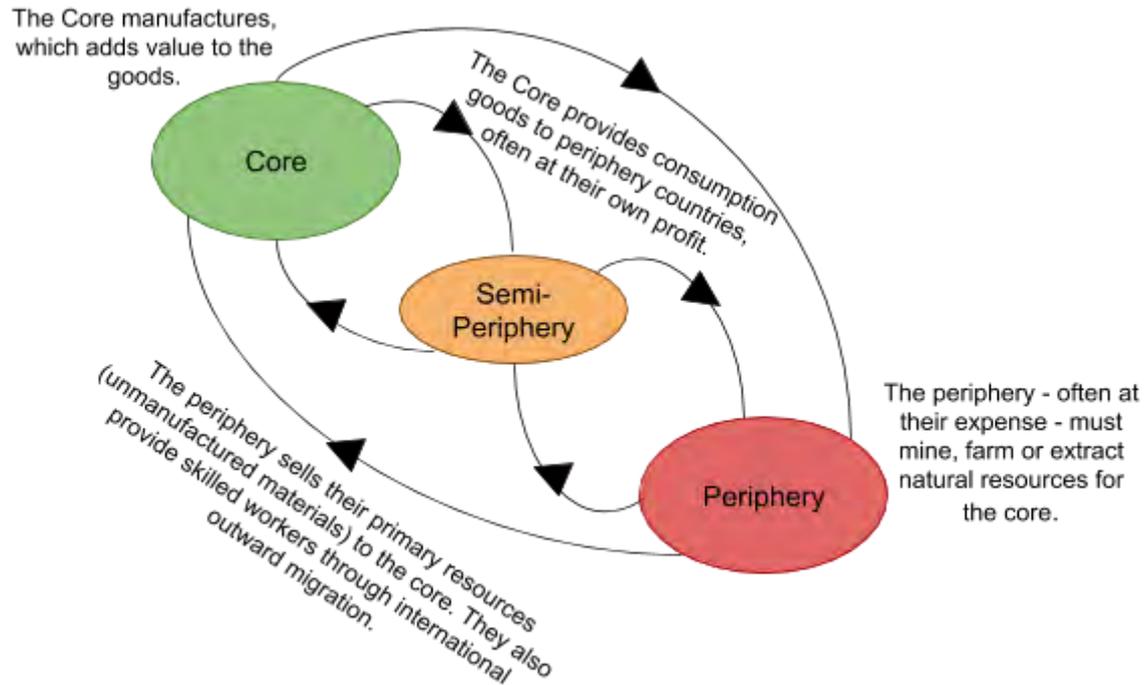
- After WWI, attempts were made to limit Germany's expansion into this strategic area.
- After WWII, NATO allies tried to contain the Soviets from expanding into south and west Europe.

However, as technology has advanced and made transportation easier the **shrinking world** has reduced the locational importance of the Heartland. Resources can easily be transported around the world, advances in military technology means armies can have more global influence without needing to colonise other nations. This has allowed nations such as America, which is on the exterior of the Heartland, to take over centre stage as a global Superpower.

Wallerstein's World Systems Theory

The World Systems Theory identifies two different economic areas within the world - the **core** and the **periphery**. Core regions are economic powerhouses and therefore control most aspects of global trade such as **trade agreements** and **trading currency**. The core regions trade with those in the periphery who often provide labour and materials for the core nations.

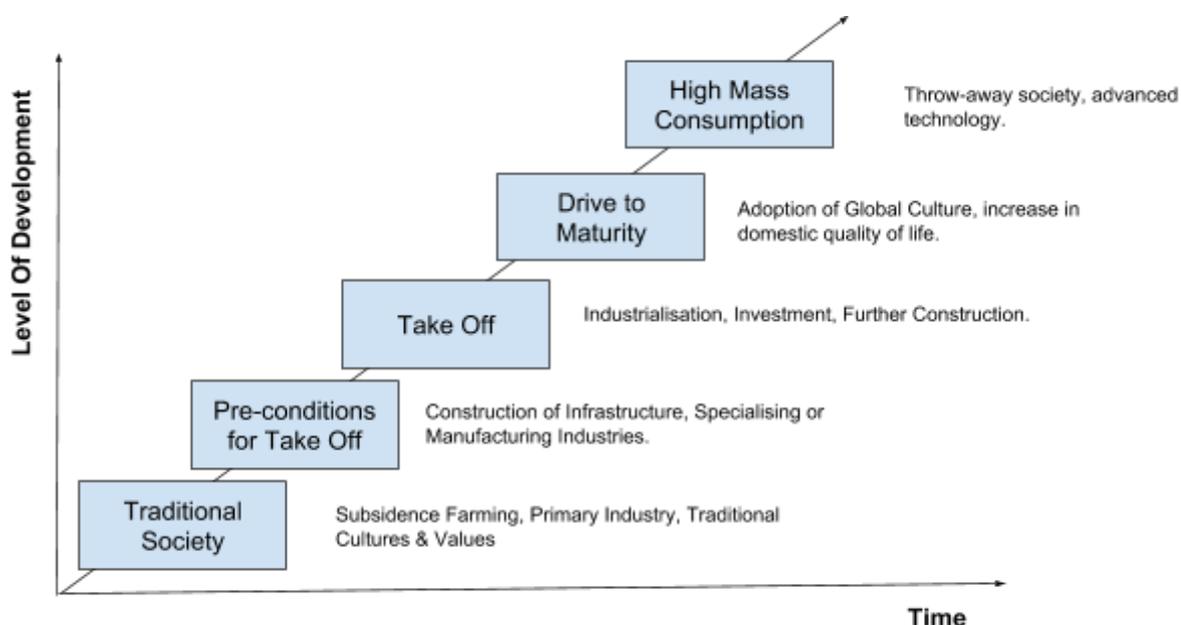




The theory tries to explain **inequality in wealth and development** across the world. In the past relationships between the core and periphery were purely exploitative (**colonialism**) and the periphery was forced to provide their natural resources through means of **hard power** such as **military force** or **occupation**. For example, the British Empire's exploitation of India for natural resources. In more recent times this relationship centres around trade agreements (**soft power**) which often benefit the core regions more than they benefit the periphery. These trade agreements often favour the core nations.



Rostow's Modernisation Theory



Rostow believed that countries pass through **five stages** as they grow economically and become developed. This development can be shown as **stages of growth** over time:

- **Traditional Society** - The country's economy is based predominantly on primary industry - agriculture, small-scale mining, foraging and fishing. There is minimal technology or scientific knowledge which protects the country's traditional culture, religion and values.
- **Pre-conditions for Take Off** - There is a demand for raw materials and trade by external countries. A rise in construction of infrastructure will lead to an increase in businesses and FDI. Gradually, the industry centres around manufacturing rather than agriculture as individual families can earn more money from a reliable job (unlike agriculture which is seasonal and can be affected by extreme weather) .
- **Take Off** - Here there is rapid Industrialisation, creating a large surge of employment opportunities and productivity. Take-off can also be a period of environmental degradation, as the nation lacks laws to protect its natural surroundings and people from exploitation.
- This is often fuelled by relaxed laws and regulations protecting the natural son accelerates, **Drive to Maturity** - Over a period of time, the growing economy will encourage new industries and investment, creating further jobs, improving services through increased tax. This is a positive feedback mechanism of gradually improving living conditions.
- **High Mass Consumption** - Developed countries, in Rostow's opinion, are countries who are capitalistic and consumers hold the most valuable opinion. Often goods are catered towards these markets, as families have disposable income to spend.

Rostow's Modernisation Theory can be closely linked to Clarke-Fisher's Model (see *Regeneration Detailed Notes*); as a country progresses through stages of modernisation, the composition of its economic industries will change.



Criticisms of the Theory

There are limitations to Rostow's model. It is based largely on American and European development (**mass consumption** and **capitalism** to create profit) and therefore ignores the stages of growth other nations who do not fit this mould may go through (e.g. Bolivia's recent sustainable development). Also, some nations may have large reserves of natural resources which allow them to skip some of the stages of development e.g. Saudi Arabia.

Rostow's Model only considers the advancement of development, so doesn't describe a nation that is declining. Some examples of declining states include:

- The USSR (post-cold war) - following 'loss' in the Cold War, the USSR became bankrupt and disbanded into the nations of today - Ukraine, Belarus, etc. The new Russia faced economic recession and social deprivation.
- Zimbabwe - For a large period of time, the government has been corrupt, limiting the country's development regardless of its level of industrial capacity.

Rostow's model only considers a country in isolation from the world, where the development is the sole responsibility of the country itself. However, this is not true; in an increasingly connected globalised world, the development of a country may be limited by international politics or competition for trade by other states.

Superpower Patterns over Time

Types of Polarity:

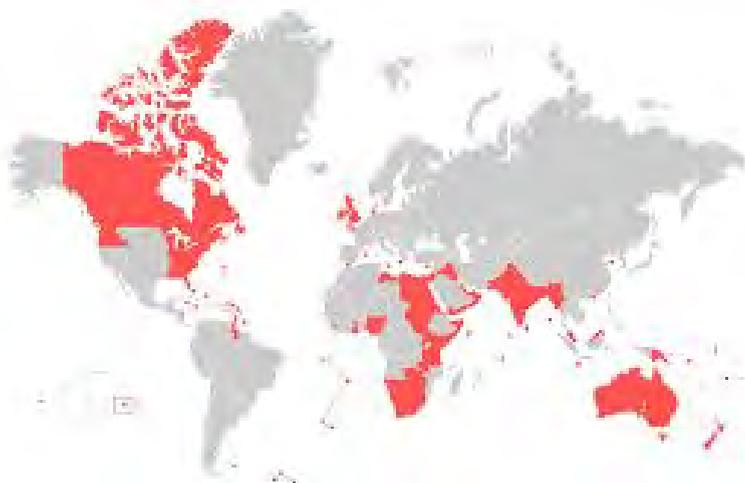
A nation's power is not fixed. Many interacting factors can lead to a country gaining or losing power. Our current **uni-polar world** is rapidly changing as **emerging superpowers** start to take a seat at the global table. This change can lead to different possible scenarios:

- **Unipolar world** – One country dominates e.g. the USA currently or the British Empire during colonial times
- **Bi-polar world** – Where there are two main superpowers with opposing ideas and ideologies e.g. the USA and USSR during the Cold War.
- **Multi-polar world** – Where there are several powers and emerging powers competing for power and global influence.

Colonial Era – The British Empire

Britain ruled a **quarter of the world's land** and a **third of the world's population** during its peak. The Royal Navy dominated the world's oceans and was double the size of Germany's (the next largest). The British Empire's expansion was based on hard power; it invaded other countries and colonised them to maintain its control. During this time, the world was considered **uni-polar**.





Colonialism had many impacts on the countries involved:

Successes of Colonial Power:

- **Railway lines** were built throughout the country and were used to **transport goods** and the **army** quickly between places.
- The **English language** spread throughout the Empire, which has allowed Commonwealth countries to become outsourcing services and participate in business.
- **Education** for all colonial states was improved - schools were set up & curriculum established. This has led to increased international migration to fill skills shortages in other countries after WWII.

Negative impacts of Colonial Power:

- The majority of crops grown in colonial states were bought by the British at very low prices and then sold off by Britain for large amounts (**Neo-colonial Theory** - see below). This means that farmers and primary manufacturers were left with little profit to invest in their own futures.
- Many colonial states did not have their own **governments**, which caused severe protests for independence and unstable countries when made independent.
- **Discriminating policies** were established to segregate the British migrants from natives. These policies have remained in some countries until recent years.

In the 20th Century, many **empires collapsed**:

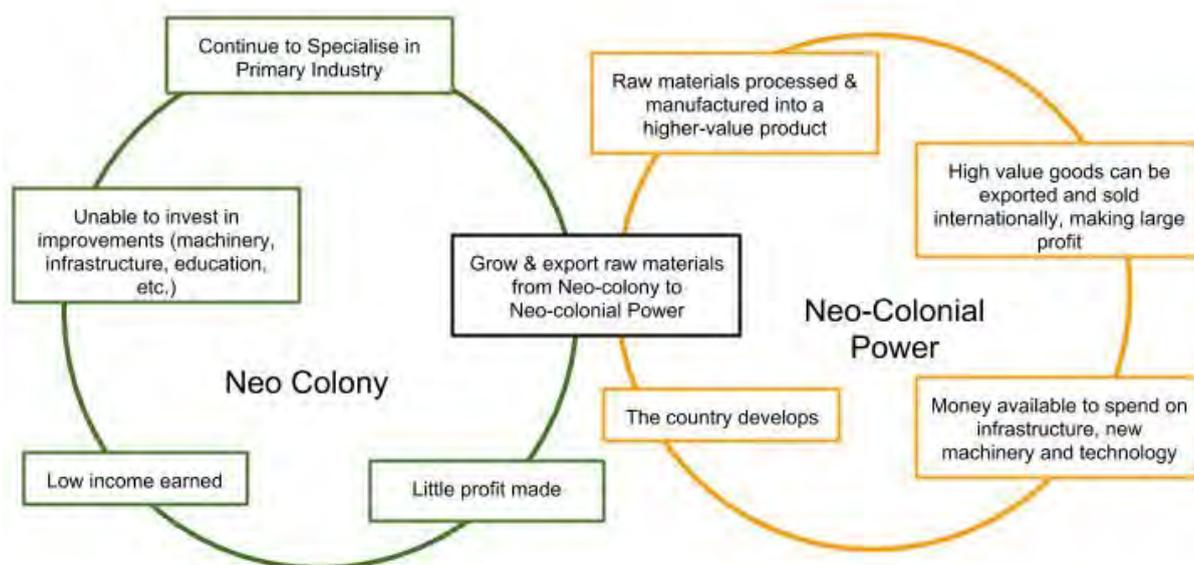
- After the war, many colonial powers were **bankrupt** as they had to spend a lot during the war and so they couldn't afford to control and maintain their colonies.
- After the wars, colonial powers focused mainly on rebuilding their home countries and so they focused less on the colonies.
- **Anti-colonial movements** gained popularity, and increasing demand for independence forced colonial armies out



Neo-Colonialism

Neo-colonialism was first used to describe the continued dependence of former colonies on other countries after their independence. However, it has now become used to describe the exploitative relationship between more powerful developed countries who are using their relationship with less developed countries for their own benefit.

Frank's Dependency Model explains the cycle of neo-colonialism, where the neo-colony becomes dependent on the neo-colonial power controlling it.



Past - Colonialism

- During the **colonial era**, Empires exploited their colonies or a variety of commodities: sugar, cotton, tea. For example, the development of Lancashire was based from the **cheap import** of cotton from plantations in America; cotton would be manufactured in large mills, through a largely **mechanised** process (faster rate of production and cheaper to run) so Lancashire companies made large profits.

Now - Neo-colonialism

- Mozambique has given **fishing rights** to China, in return for infrastructure (hospitals, airports, roads). China actually has 1 million of its people living in Africa and has invested over \$40 billion into African nations. This may sound quite fair, but local fishermen are now **out-competed**, losing their source of income and instead having to work for Chinese fishing boats for less money.
- The **IMF and World Bank** have both been accused of being 'neo-colonial'. They provide **loans** to developing nations, but with high rates of repayment and conditions if the developing nation is unable to repay. Therefore, developing nations become 'trapped' in a cycle of debt and have to open their economies to private companies (governments lose assets and income, making them even less likely to repay their debts).



Bipolar World - The Cold War

The **Cold War** lasted from 1945 to 1990, and was a time of **geopolitical tension** between the USA and USSR. Both were dominant powers and were vying for more global influence and power. The USA is a **democratic society** which was based on a **capitalist economy**. Whereas the USSR was under **communist** rule and had a **centrally-owned economy**.

| | Capitalism | Communism/ Centrally-Owned Economy |
|----------|--|--|
| Features | -Private ownership of property and businesses -Wages are based on supply & demand and level of skills -People have a right to make a profit and keep it -Ability to buy and sell goods in a free market with little restriction | -Government owns land and businesses Wages are determined by government -Profits are taken by government and invested into services -Supply of goods controlled by the government |
| Examples | USA, UK, France, Japan | USSR, China, Cuba |

During the cold war:

- The USSR installed **communist governments** in Eastern Europe (e.g. in Poland and Hungary). These countries were of strategic importance to the USSR as they provided a 'shield' in case the West attacked Russia.
- The border between Eastern and Western Europe became known as **The Iron Curtain** and was heavily defended by opposing parties.
- The countries supporting the USSR formed the **Warsaw Pact** (a military agreement of alliance).
- The USA created **NATO**, which its allies joined to cooperate military powers.
- After 1945, the USA provided billions of dollars' worth of **aid** to many European nations to rebuild after the wars.
- The USA also invested significant amount into Japan, Singapore and The Philippines in order to protect these countries from being influenced by communism.
- The **Space Race** became a competition of knowledge and economic capacity between the USA and USSR. Despite the fact that the USSR sent the first man (Yuri Gagarin) and first satellite (Sputnik) into space, many believe that the USA won after sending Apollo 11 to the moon.

The term 'cold' is used to describe the war as there was no large-scale direct fighting between the two sides. Instead the two sides supported opposing wars which are described as **proxy wars**.

- Vietnam War – The USA fought directly against groups which were supported by China and the USSR.
- Korean War – Korea was divided into the South which was supported by the US and the North which was supported by China and the USSR.

After the collapse of the USSR, the USA became the global dominating force again.



Modern Day & Future Power - Multipolar?

The past shows us large, singular forces dominating global power. However, as countries who were previously held back economically by colonialism begin to develop rapidly a new wave of nations are now vying for a seat on the main stage. These **emerging economies** tend to be based on **free-market capitalism**. This is becoming increasingly dominant throughout the world whilst other economic systems have become weaker:

- Socialist economies collapsed in the USSR and Eastern Europe.
- China has moved away from socialism to a model known as state capitalism.
- There has been reform in communist Cuba allowing some limited private ownership of businesses.

Currently, there is a divide into two groups of states:

- **BRICS** – Brazil, Russia, India, China & South Africa
- **G20** – Includes the EU and countries like Turkey, Indonesia, South Korea, Saudi, Mexico

The G20 economies account for 85% of the world's GDP and 85% of the world's trade, hence are more influential. However, with changing industries and the adoption of new political approaches & ideology, **BRICS may overtake G20** and become most influential.

Emerging Powers

There are many strengths and weaknesses of emerging countries' powers. An **emerging country** is a state that has a developing economy or government and has **large projected growth**.

Exam tip - do not refer to the BRICS as one entity in your answers. They are different countries with vastly different characteristics and should be treated individually.

| | <u>Brazil</u> | <u>Russia</u> | <u>China</u> | <u>India</u> |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|
| <u>Economic</u> | -Brazil is important regionally for South America as it produces more than 50% of S. America's GDP -It has large reserves of natural resources -It has energy and food security. It is self-sufficient in producing and sourcing its own food and energy resources. -The economy | -It is the 9 th largest economy in the world and has large reserves of oil and gas. However It is overly dependent on oil and gas for revenue, which is not sustainable income for the future. -The country has been hit with EU sanctions that have weakened the Ruble and the economy. | -China is a major player in global investment, the Chinese have invested heavily in developing countries especially in Africa. -A lot has been invested in modern infrastructure like high speed rail throughout the country. -Due to its large population, GDP per capita is only 10% of USA's. -Many of its industries copies foreign ideas and so it isn't very innovative. -In 2009, only 2% of China's | Between 1997 and 2015, annual growth rates averaged 7% which is much higher than MDCs. -Widespread use of English has been beneficial as it has attracted many TNCs. -Infrastructure like energy and water supply as well as transport is poor, power cuts are frequent. |



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| | <p>repeatedly faces boom and bust phases, that severely hamper Brazil's development.</p> | <p>-It is the most unequal emerging nation, where the richest 1% control 71% of total wealth.</p> | <p>adult population graduated from university. -Rising wages in China have led to TNCs moving to cheaper countries like Bangladesh. - Its ageing population combined with its one Child Policy may cause its economy to collapse entirely.</p> | <p>-The government has a lot of debt. -Society is very unequal and more than 20% of people live in poverty.</p> |
| Political | <p>- Brazil has been very politically unstable in recent years. - Corruption is rife throughout the country. - Since 2015, leadership has drastically changed. The President was impeached in 2015, leading to uncertainty. In 2018, the far-right Bolsonaro was elected.</p> | <p>-It is a permanent member of the UN Security Council. -Relations with the EU are strained and its annexation of Crimea exacerbated this.</p> | <p>-Unlike the USA, China doesn't really get involved in global crises or aid towards other countries, limiting China's international relations. -China's government is run by an authoritarian party. -Has tense relationships with many SE Asian nations.</p> | <p>-India is the world's largest democracy -It is a member of the G20 and was a founding member of the UN. -It has poor geopolitical relations with neighbours like China and Pakistan.</p> |
| Military | <p>-Its military is insignificant; only playing a small regional role and no international involvement.</p> | <p>-It has nuclear weapons and a large military. -Russia has intervened in Syria with airstrikes which has damaged relations with other countries. -The majority of Russia's fleet and aircraft are ageing and unsuitable for modern times.</p> | <p>-China's People Liberation Army has the world's largest army and has nuclear weapons. - China's army (PLA) is dated; despite its large numbers of soldiers the army is very poorly equipped.</p> | <p>-It has the 4th largest military in terms of personnel and weaponry -It has nuclear weapons. - India has come to month-long standoffs with neighbouring China to maintain its border.</p> |



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| Demographic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The population of 210 million is the largest in South America. -The population is very young. -Fertility rates have decreased significantly so the population may decline in the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The population of 144 million is quite large, but largely spread across Russia's vast lands, leading to isolation and lack of development of many regions. -Russia's population has been declining in recent years as birth rates are very low. -The population is ageing which is impacting the economy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The population of 1.38 billion allows for a vast labour pool, allowing China's economy to increase. -By 2020, it is expected that 12% of the population will be over 65 which will require expensive support through healthcare and social care -China has little inwards migration so they are unable to attract talent and skills from abroad that they may lack. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The population is 1.27 billion (largest after China). -The majority of Indians are young and so there is a large pool of labour available. - However, there is much outward migration of India's youth, which may lead to a declining future population and brain drain of skilled workers. |
| Cultural | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Brazil has a global reputation as a footballing nation and has won many world cups. -It hosted the Olympics + Paralympics in 2016 and the FIFA World Cup in 2014. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Russia has little cultural influence. - However, its growing influence in USA (Trump's election), military assistance to Nigeria (to combat Boko Haram) and Syria (controversial air strikes) suggests that Russia's global influence is expanding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -China's influence is growing as they are investing in other countries (such as Africa). -Some Cantonese food has been adopted in other countries. -China has very little global influence on culture. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Bollywood which is the world's largest film industry outside of Hollywood, producing 1200 films annually -Indian food is very common and important in many parts of the world. |
| Environmental | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deforestation is a major issue with large swathes of the Amazon being cut down for agricultural and commercial purposes. -Pollution is another major problem from | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One of the most ecologically stressed landscapes due to human degradation -> extraction of natural resources damages surroundings, salinization and overgrazing is causing soils to deteriorate, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -China is the world's largest emitter of CO₂, producing 33% of the world's emissions. -Rivers throughout China have been polluted with chemicals from factories. -Large amounts of land across the world in places like the Amazon rainforest are being cut down in order to export good to China | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -India is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world with various plant and animal species. -Pollution is a major problem as India is the world's third largest emitter of CO₂. -India has some of |



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| | mining and oil spills. | improper waste disposal. | where demand from consumers is rising rapidly. | the world's largest and worst urban slums which have damaged the environment. |
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The future is **uncertain**. However, there is some ideas of how global superpower status could change.

Stability – Countries around the world could form their own alliances and another Cold War could occur.

Resources – There could be strong economic and population growth in Asia but along with high demand from the West, worldwide demand for food could increase 35%, 40% for water and 50% for energy by 2030. This could lead severe shortages, high prices and conflict over resources.

Military – A new arms race could occur as China expands its naval and air power.

Economy – If Asia were to become dominant, then the global economy would depend on the health of NICs in Asia rather than the West.

Alternative Superpowers - IGOs & TNCs

There are some **IGOs** and **TNCs** that have more power than a country. Often, they have links to a current superpower and have **economic or political influence** over others.

The World Bank and IMF

The World Bank and IMF provides **loans** to developing countries. These loans aim to help the country develop. For example, They have both been criticised due to them providing funds for projects that have been **unethical** and have **damaged the environment** e.g. rainforest clearance to make way for developments.

They have also been criticised because they have given loans to countries who are incapable to pay back their loans. These countries, in an attempt to reduce their debt, have had to agree to SAPs forcing them to **open up their markets** and **privatise their companies** (more details in Globalisation Detailed Notes). The USA and EU have the highest proportion of voting rights within both these organisations, so their interests are closely tied with the IGOs, rather than the interests of the indebted countries.

The WTO

The WTO aims to ensure **free global trade** and opportunities are equal for all countries. The WTO generally aims to **reduce protectionist measures**. However, it has been criticised because it has failed to stop developed nations from protecting its own industries. For example, the USA and EU which give subsidies to their farmers but this affected developing



nations as farmers in developing nations have lost out as their produce becomes less competitive due to it being more expensive

The WEF (World Economic Forum)

The WEF is a Swiss not-for-profit organisation which promotes **public-private co-operation**. The organisation meets every year in Davos where there are thousands of politicians, delegates, economists etc. It costs **\$19,000** to attend, which makes attendance for small businesses or under-represented countries limited.

Global TNCs

The largest TNCs in the world originate from superpowers and emerging nations. TNCs come in 2 different types:

- Publicly traded TNCs who are owned by **various shareholders** generally pension funds and banks
- State-owned TNCs which are **owned by governments** through 100% share or majority

In 2014, the world's 500 largest companies generated \$31.2 trillion in revenue and employed over 65 million people. Many TNCs in emerging superpowers are state-owned.

TNCs have become dominant and more influential than IGOs due to many reasons:

- **Economies of scale** has allowed them to reduce their costs and out-compete their smaller competitors, gaining huge profits in the process.
- Their ability to borrow money has allowed them to invest in **new technology**
- The move towards **capitalism** across the world has opened up more opportunities for them

TNCs have influence over **global culture** and the **ownership of innovation** and patents.

Europe and America dominate ownership of major TNCs and through which they have spread Western culture across the world. Companies such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's are recognised globally. Most of the world's **global media** is dominated by the USA, so their views and ideology is easily spread around the world.

American and Western culture isn't always adopted, for example:

- **Cultural dishes** from Asia, such as curry and sushi, are quickly becoming more popular than American or European cuisine.
- Certain aspects of American culture like **American football** have been successfully adopted across the globe.

TNCs and governments around the world invest heavily in **research and development** in order to develop new products and processes that are unique. **Intellectual Property laws** protect these new inventions through:

- **Patents** for technologies and systems
- **Copyright** for music, books and artworks



- **Trademarks** for designs like logos

Anyone who wants to use these innovations has to pay royalty fees to the inventor or designer. In the past, patents have only been available to Western TNCs, due to the high cost of application. However, there has been a recent increase in alternative countries with patents and intellectual property, such as China.

UN Security Council

Arguably the **most powerful IGO** in the world, the UN consists of 5 permanent member (USA, UK, France, China & Russia) and 10 non-permanent rotating members which change every 2 years. The UN has the **internationally-recognised power** to:

- **Sanctions** can be applied to countries that are deemed to be a security risk (e.g. North Korea), harbouring terrorism, threatening or invading other states.
- **Military force** against another country can be authorised
- **UN Peacekeeping Force** can be authorised to reduce conflict and tensions or improve development and quality of life for locals.

It could be said that the UN Security Council works in an imperfect way because:

- Any of the permanent member states can **veto** a decision
- The USA, UK & France usually vote together whilst Russia and China generally vote together which leads to no progress within the council

The International Court of Justice

The court (based in the Hague, The Netherlands) settles disputes between different UN member states. The ICJ has 15 judges of which 5 are from the West with the remaining from other parts of the world. It aims to achieve **geopolitical stability** and hold governments accountable for actions against the **welfare and human rights** of their people.

UN Climate Change Conferences

Finally, the UN also aims to encourage the protection of the environment and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The changing attitude of many state governments has been caused by several important conferences:

- **Montreal Protocol** - Finalised in 1987. Aimed to stop the use of CFCs and Halons, both highly damaging to the ozone layer.
- **The Kyoto Protocol** - Held in 1997. Aimed to generally reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- **The Paris Agreement** - Held in 2015. Highest number of signatures/ states participating to date. However, key emitters such as the USA have withdrawn since.



Government Alliances & Cooperation

Governments may form **alliances** with other countries for a variety of reasons: to reduce conflict, co-operate efforts or combine intelligence, strengthen trade partnerships, improve and protect the natural environment.

Military Alliances

NATO - NATO is a group of nations which was formed during the Cold War and consists of allies of the USA. Its main policy dictates that if one member gets attacked, other members will come and assist that country.

- Recent Russian military activity in Ukraine and Eastern Europe has brought NATO members together as they don't want Russia to gain control of more land and influence more people. This has led to an escalation of tensions and NATO has sent in more troops.

ANZUS Treaty - This is a security agreement between Australia, New Zealand and the US. The aim of the treaty is to cooperate on military matters in the Pacific. The treaty has allowed the US to maintain a presence in the Pacific.

Economic Alliances

European Union - The EU began with just six founding nations but has since increased to include 28 member states. The EU promotes free trade and movement of goods and people between member states. There is increasing tensions within different EU states from those who want greater integration and cooperation and those who want to leave (e.g. Brexit).

ASEAN - This consists of 10 South-East Asian nations. The organisation was formed to encourage greater cooperation between the different states and also increase economic growth in the region. This cooperation is important since there has been historic conflict between ASEAN States.

NAFTA - This consists of free trade between Mexico, Canada and the US. Many companies in Canada and the US have benefitted as they have relocated many of their manufacturing plants to Mexico due to lower labour costs which in turn have increased their profit margins. However, this has come at a cost to many Americans and Canadians as many have lost their jobs, leading to a rise of extreme political opinions - Donald Trump has vowed to leave the free trade area in order to protect and bring back job to the USA (**protectionism**).

Environmental Alliances

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - This organisation was established by the UN in 1988. Its aims are to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the harm humans are doing to the environment. Its success can be argued, since many governments still pollute and are not held accountable by the many policies and protocols they may have signed.

Global Environmental Concerns

Emerging economies and the growing wealth of many countries has led to **increased consumption** of various resources. **High resource consumption** (the last stage in **Rostow's Modernisation Model**) has caused many environmental problems:

- **Urban air quality** in emerging power cities is very dangerous due to poor vehicle engines.



- **Imports and exports** have increased so CO₂ has increased through increased transport. This means goods have a **larger carbon footprint**.
- **Deforestation** has accelerated as people cut down trees in order to grow crops for food or biofuel.

The Growing Middle Class

In the future, the number of people who are affluent or middle class is expected to rise significantly, especially in emerging countries such as the BRICSs. As a population becomes richer they start to use more resources. For example, they live in bigger houses which require more heating, they have more appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers which use energy and water, they have more vehicles which cause more pollution, they can afford to go on holidays and use aeroplanes to travel the world. The **rise of the middle-classes** will cause **pressure** on existing resources, such as:

- **Food security** - There will be more demand for volume and variety of food types. Land used for staple foods will be converted to produce meat and dairy products, which are more expensive to produce and release more greenhouse gases. This will cause food prices to rise, which would affect the poorest worst.
- **Water security** - Many emerging countries already suffer from water shortages. By 2030, it is estimated that 60% of places in India will face water scarcity. This could also worsen food security, as droughts induce crop failures and famine.
- **Energy security** - Oil demand is expected to rise by 30% by 2030. Prices of oil will increase and there may be shortages, causing electricity blackouts. Countries with vast reserves are likely to be in a good position (e.g. Russia) whereas countries not self-sufficient will be left vulnerable to exploitation.
- **Resource security** - Demand for rare earth minerals increases leading to higher prices. For example, the demand for lithium based batteries is very high and could be hard to meet. There could be severe shortages for basic metals like copper, tin, and platinum

This **increased pressure** on resources will not only make the **resources more scarce** but could **increase tensions** between nations (between those who have an excess of resources and those who need them) and **increase prices**.

Reducing emissions

The emissions of developed countries is reducing. However, emissions in developing and emerging nations are increasing significantly. This is a controversial issue.

- Developed countries have already gone through a period of industrialisation where they had high emissions, as developing nations are just entering this stage of development now then why shouldn't they be allowed to do the same?
- The reason why developed countries emissions have decreased is because they have outsourced their manufacturing to less-developed countries who are effectively polluting on the developed countries behalf.

Some critics see the EU's and USA's disapproval of developing countries' emissions as a reluctance to allow them to develop.



In recent years, many attitudes towards Climate Change have shifted. These differences in how to act about climate change could increase political tensions between countries and have long-lasting negative impacts on the environment.

- Since **Donald Trump's election**, America has pulled out of many environmental initiatives and programmes. He has given permission for oil drilling in Alaskan Refuge parks, contradicting the protection Obama tried to implement on these ecologically delicate areas. This will increase carbon emissions produced by the USA.
- The EU sees climate change as a **21st Century Problem** and is working towards policies and programmes to reduce emissions such as the development of wide-scale renewable energy production.
- In 2014, China agreed to work towards an emissions peak in 2030 but only committed to these targets in 2016. China is also the world's largest investor in renewable energy. If China was to change its energy habits, it could be a drastically large shift in emissions.
- Russia supported the 2015 Paris Climate Change agreement, it agreed to reduce carbon emissions by 30% from 1990 levels. However, this actually means that they can increase their emissions and still be on target! (When the economy collapsed in 1991, Russia's emissions levels declined below the target level without effort).
- There are no sanctions for if countries miss their emissions targets.

Spheres of Contest

There are many **spheres of contest** (regions or property that governments compete over):

Land Ownership:

- There are **borders and islands** that remain unclear over who owns them.
- This may be because there is untapped **energy sources**, opportunity for **expansion**, **military** strategic importance.

Intellectual Property:

- Intellectual property is difficult to protect due to: **increasing counterfeiting** and the difficult classification of an individual idea - how different does an invention have to be to be considered 'new'?
- **Patenting** is important for TNCs, since having a **unique selling point** is crucial for profits. Large amounts of money are paid in legal fees each year by TNCs trying to stop other companies using their ideas: e.g. in May 2018 Korean company Samsung was ordered to pay \$539m to the American company Apple after a US court agreed they had copied patented features from the iPhone.
- Companies with a patent don't have to share their inventions, which leads to an **ethical dilemma** - medical companies don't have to release an antidote during a disease outbreak. The costs of developing new medicines and technologies would not be recouped through selling if others just sold the same product at lower prices.



Arctic Oil and Gas:

- It is estimated that **30%** of the world's undiscovered gas reserves are in the Arctic which is worth billions of dollars.
- As a result, **sovereignty** over the Arctic is disputed as different countries claim territory within the circle, potentially allowing them to claim the Arctic itself in the future.
- Three of the main parties involved have **nuclear weapons** (Russia, USA, EU). Russia placed a Russian flag on the North pole in 2007 which escalated tension.
- Scientific expeditions in the area have increased but these have been seen as controversial.
- Russia and Canada have both created **Arctic forces** to protect their interests and run military exercises.

Russia's Western Border:

Russia considers its sphere of influence to be parts of **Eastern Europe** as most people are **ethnic Russians** and the majority of people speak Russian as their first language. Many of these countries were formerly part of the **Soviet Union**. However, some now wish to join the EU which Russia sees as a threat to its power.

Tensions between Russia and the EU and America have increased:

- Following the annexation of Crimea by Russia, the EU and USA impose many economic sanctions which have damaged the Russian economy.
- NATO deployed more troops across Eastern European nations in case Russia attacked a NATO member state.

Developing countries: Opportunities and threats

The USA and the EU have been accused of having **unfair relationships** with developing nations.

- **Neo-colonialism** – Superpowers pulling the economic and political strings even though they don't directly rule and control developing nations
- **Unfair terms of trade** – Cheap commodity exports from developing nations but expensive imports from the developed world
- **Brain drain** - skilled and educated workers go to the core countries which are developed which in turn hinders the growth of developing countries' economies

Centre of Economic Gravity

The world's **economic centre of gravity** has slowly shifted from the West and is travelling to the **East**. This is because Asian states are becoming influential players in the global economy, whilst the role of the EU and USA is slowly diminishing. By 2050, it is expected that the GDP of Asia will be 174 trillion whilst the USA and Europe will be lower at 151 trillion.

Asia's Rising Status:

Foreign direct investment (previously flowing from the developed West) has recently originated from Asian countries (such as China and India). However, some believe that FDI



is encouraging **neo-colonial relationships** between the developing and LEDCs; the donor country 'gifts' money or infrastructure in return for natural resources (minerals, oceans to fish, etc).

Asian influences on the global economy are increasing significantly. This has led to increasing **tensions** between Asian states as each vies for additional resources or relations to advance their global status.

Conflict in The Middle East:

The Middle East has been one of the most **unstable** region in the last few decades.

Tension and conflict include:

- An **alliance** between the West with Israel and Arab monarchies whilst an opposing alliance has been formed between Iran, Syria, Russia and China. The Israelis are provided with billions in aid and equipment from the USA and Europe whilst Russia backs the Iranian and Syrian regimes.
- The **invasion and occupation** in Iraq (2003-2011) and Afghanistan (2001-2010) was US-led, and (officially) aimed to remove Hussain and Taliban, create stable governments and remove weapons of mass destruction. However, suspicions of the true aims of these occupations - to protect oil sources - has created mistrust in British and US governments.
- A **refugee crisis** has been created from the conflict between the different factions within Syria and Iraq which has forced 2 million people to flee to Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon which are struggling to cope with the large refugee numbers.
- The ongoing conflict between **Palestine and Israel**; Israel has taken land from Palestinians and built settlements which has continued to cause tensions with Muslims around the world

Reasons for the Middle East's conflict include:

- **Religion** – Sunni and Shia countries are fighting against each other and in proxy wars (e.g. Yemen).
- **Oil and gas** – 65% of the world's crude oil comes from the Middle East.
- **History** – Colonial powers drew up the borders in this area which caused a lot of conflict, as borders don't separate populations of separate communities and cultures.

Uncertainty for existing superpowers

Challenges for the EU

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Debt in the Eurozone €9.7 trillion in 2016 and £1.6trillion for the UK. -In 2016, unemployment stood at 10% which was a burden for taxpayers. -Youth unemployment in the EU was 22% in 2015 and over 45% in Greece and Spain. |
|-----------------|--|



| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Demographic: | <p>-The EU's population is ageing, by 2025 it is estimated that 20% of EU citizens will be over 65.</p> <p>-After 2035, there is likely to be an overall decline in the population due to low birth rates.</p> |
| Political | <p>-The 28 nations don't agree on all things and issues.</p> <p>-Tensions between countries that want a deeper union (Germany and France) and those who want a looser union (UK) have increased.</p> <p>-Immigration has become a very big political and divisive issue.</p> |
| Resources | <p>-EU's energy predominantly comes from Russia and as relations between the EU and Russia are not very good right now, there could be energy insecurity for EU nations in the future.</p> |

Challenges for the USA

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Economic | <p>-National debt in 2016 stood at \$19 trillion</p> <p>-The USA between 2012 and 2014 spent over \$900 billion on its military (this is more than the whole GDP of Indonesia or the Netherlands).</p> |
| Demographic: | <p>-The population is expected to grow from 324 million in 2016 to 415 million in 2060 which cause lead to pressures on services and infrastructure.</p> |
| Political: | <p>-There is often political deadlock between democrats and Republicans at state level.</p> <p>- The recent election of Trump threatens to undermine previous work by Obama (Arctic Refuge Parks, Climate Change Agreements, Social Acceptance).</p> |
| Resources: | <p>-Water insecurity is a major problem especially in the South West. Many droughts affect this area, and an increasing number of illegally used aquifers will further drain water supplies unsustainably.</p> |



Social:

-**Health spending** constitutes around 17% of the USA's annual GDP, this is a very big cost for people and the government.
-70% of Americans are **overweight**, with obesity, diabetes and cancer care causing serious health problems or death for the population.

Future Demonstrations of Power:

In the future, states may have new ways of showing their economic ability or political influence. For example:

Nuclear weapons – Governments currently invest in nuclear weapons to **deter potential attackers**. In 2016, the UK parliament voted in favour of renewing Trident, their nuclear weapons programme, despite it costing from £100-250 billion over 50 years. However, with **changing attitudes** towards nuclear deterrents (such as ICAN being awarded the Nobel peace prize in 2017) they may prove unfavourable in the future.

Space exploration – Many countries now have space exploration programmes. This may prove **profitable** in the future, as the exploration of Mars may provide countries with **natural resources** and new energy sources. Money invested in space exploration by different countries:

- USA \$17.6 bn
- EU \$5.5 bn
- Russia \$5.6 bn
- Japan \$2 bn
- China \$1.3 bn
- India \$1.1 bn

Intelligence services – After **recent attacks** in the West, governments value their intelligence services. Also, with the rise of **international incidents** (for example, Russian nerve agent poisonings in the UK) the need for espionage on other states may increase.

