

CRITICAL GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

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ABSTRACT. Human activities need a physical support, that is the geographical space. There are great accumulations of primary and secondary energy in some segments of this space, which in time, turn into violent actions. In our opinion, we term these areas as critical geographical regions.

Human actions, their results, biotical economic, social, cultural and political processes take place in well-delineated and variably-extended geographical spaces. Geographical space represents the necessary physical support. It gets specific physiognomical expressions according to the way of insertion and association of antropical components on specific physical surfaces.

The dynamics and amplitude of physical phenomena on earth's surface is given by the global "energetic set out". The stores of primary energy are brought about objectively and they do not submit to human will. The energetic stores of human nature are governed by economic, political and social laws, i.e. brought about by human actions.

Critical geographical regions are the results of storing and violently releasing primary endogenous and exogenous energy and energetic human accumulations and their violent release because of economic, social and political causes. Phenomena taking place within critical geographical regions may be: earthquakes, tordaneous, volcanism with manifestations of primary energetic accumulations, ethnic, religions, cultural, economic, political, territorial conflicts with manifestations of energetic human accumulations. Critical primary stages have global expressions, if we also take into account other critical manifestations as droughts, floods, frost, insect invasions etc. That is why we are going to speak about critical geographical regions only as far as the outcome of tant human accumulations in the territory is violent.

Critical geographical regions are different from geographical regions with normal evolution where the adopted strategies are meant to prevent violent manifestations.

The lot of critical manifestations needs certain spaces where tensions become paroxystic.

The essential characteristic of critical geographical regions lies in the accumulation of different tensions, which gives them remarkable fragility. The surprising element in case of events is the results of their fragility. Maintaing tensions and decisions usually happen in extra-regional geographical spaces. Critical geographical regions appear and

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Fig. 1. The Carabian and the Panama Isthmus region. A. The continental subregion: I. The north continental compartement: a. — Belize, 1 — Belize City; b. — Guatemala, 2 — Ciudad de Guatemala; c. — Honduras, 3 — Tegucigalpa; d. — Salvador, 4 — San Salvador; e. — Nicaragua, 5 — Managua; f. — Costa Rica, 6 — San Jose; II. The central compartement; g. — Panama, 7 — Panama, 8 — Colon; III. The southern compartement; h. — Columbia, 9 — Medellin; i. — Venezuela, 10 — Maracaibo; B. The island subregion; j. — Cuba, 1 — Havana; k. — Jamaica, 2 — Kingston; l. — Haiti, 3 — Port-au-Prince; m. — Dominic Rep., 4 — Santo Domingo; n. — Porto Rico, 5 — San Juan; o. — Caracao.



Fig. 2. The Mediterranean region.



Fig. 3. The Near and Middle East region. A. The Near subregion; I. The northern compartement; 1 - Sidon, 2 - Bânyas, 3 - Haifa, 4 - Nazareth; II. The southern compartement; 5 - Ieurasalem, 6 - Ghaza, 7 - El Aqabah; III. The Sinai copartement; 8 - Port Said, 9 - Suez; B. The Middle East subregion; I. The northern compartement; 1 - Zakhu, 2 - Mosul; 3 - Kirkuk; II. The central compartement; 4 - Bagdad; III. The southern compartement; 5 - Rumaila, 6 - Basra, 7 - Al Kuwait, 8 - Burgan, 9 - Abadan, 10 - Gach-Saran, 11 - Kharg, 12 - Al Quatif, 13 - Ras Tanura, 14 - Gawar, 15 - Manamuh; 16 - Doha, IV. The Oman subregion, 17 - Mashen, 18 - Sirri, 19 - Dubai.

develop in contact spaces, namely physical contact spaces as well as ethnic, economic, social, cultural or political ones. The superpositions of physical contact regions with antropolical ones is accidental. Critical geographical regions represent the result of converging interests with violent manifestations and variable frequencies, intensities and stretches. that is the cause of another characteristic of such a region — reiteration of paroxysm.

Critical geographical regions are subdivided into subregions, areals and critical spots. Subregions are significant because of the relatively big extension of regions in space, the most significant being those separating continent zones from island ones. Within subregions we point out territories where tensions characterize small spaces, which are called areals. They can usually be defined as states provinces of firstrank administrative units within national territories.

Areal are defined by one or several critical centers with their surrounding territory in spacial proximity and continuity. The areals within continental subregion are the widest, the most tormented and the most unfluential.

Critical centers concentrate regional interest and they are usually limited to capitals or border localities. The paroxystic states both in the areal and in the centers may be simultaneous or asynchronous.

On the whole critical geographical regions are characterized by the dispersal of areals and critical centers, their territorial delineatons being brought about by the nature of conflicts, their duration and their concentration in the territory. Whithin critical geographical regions, tensions decrease from critical centers, which are paroxysm points, on to the outskirts of the region where they are faint but do not die.

Critical geographical regions have a remarkable structural mobility brought about by the diversity and nature of interest displayed during different periods of time.

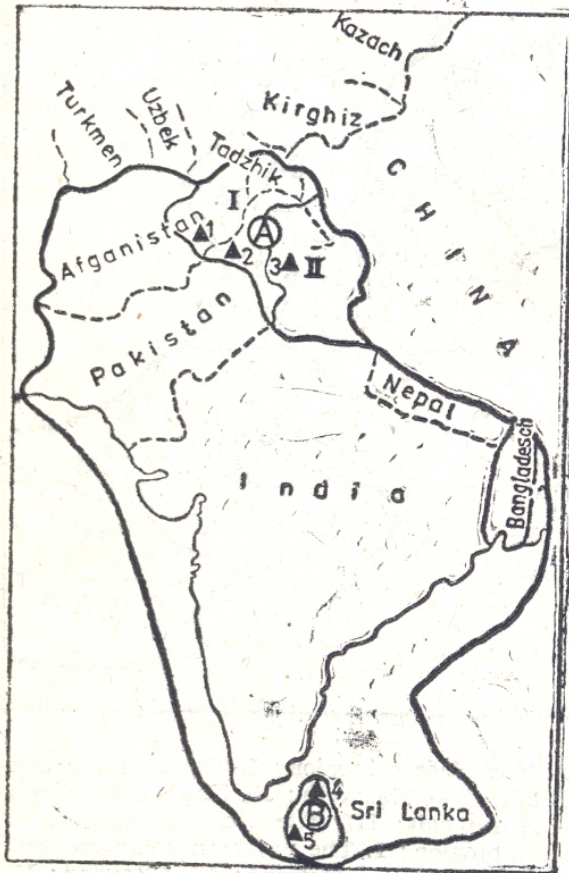


Fig. 4. Central-Southern Asia. A. The northern subregion; I. The western compartment. 1 — Kabul, 2 — Peshawar; II. The eastern compartment; 3 — Shrinsagar; B. The northern subregion, 4 — Yapanaya, 5 — Colombo.

According to the effect of paraxystic stages and the concern they engage critical geographical regions may be classified.

In my opinion, the most eloquent territorial example of critical geographical regions is the territory between the North and the South. The rich North and the poor South border on a space of tension manifestations roughly between 10° and 40° North latitude. Within this territory which is like a planetary belt, a kind of buffer space, the accumulation of tensions has brought and brings about conflicts different in time and motivation the critical geographical regions spatially delineated according to positional criteria are.

- I. The Carabbian Sea and the Panama Isthmus region.
- II. The Mediterranean Sea region.
- III. The Near and Middle East region.
- IV. Central-Southern Asia.
- V. Indochina and Eastern Asia.

They have the following features: continuity of conflicts after World War II; most of them are situated at inter-continental contacts; they have about the name historic determination being centers of ancient civilizations; they have small surfaces if compared to continental ones; most of them are influenced by converging interests of some extra-regional powers.

The critical geographical region of the Carabbian Sea and the Panama Isthmus is under USA influence. Cuba does not mean too much as a consequence of Soviet retirement in the area. Here there is a continental subregion and island one.

The areals and the centres in the continental subregion are more active in comparison with the island subregion one. The most important focus in the Panama Canal.

The critical geographical region of the Mediterranean Sea is mainly remembered for the Greek-Turkish conflict set in Cyprus Island. Tensions in Sicily and Corsica have internal economic and ethnic causes and they can't stir up extra-regional drives. Gibraltar, Malta and the maritime space will always be disputed territories among the great military and maritime powers.

The critical region of Near and Middle East is the widest as for as terrestrial space is concerned, it has the most frequent, the bloodiest and the oldest conflicts. Dependence of a lot of countries on Arab oil and the founding of the Jewish state within the Arab world influence the whole world by focusing interest.

The critical geographical interest of Central-Southern Asia contains tensions of varied nature (territorial claims, regional conflicts, political ambitions etc.).

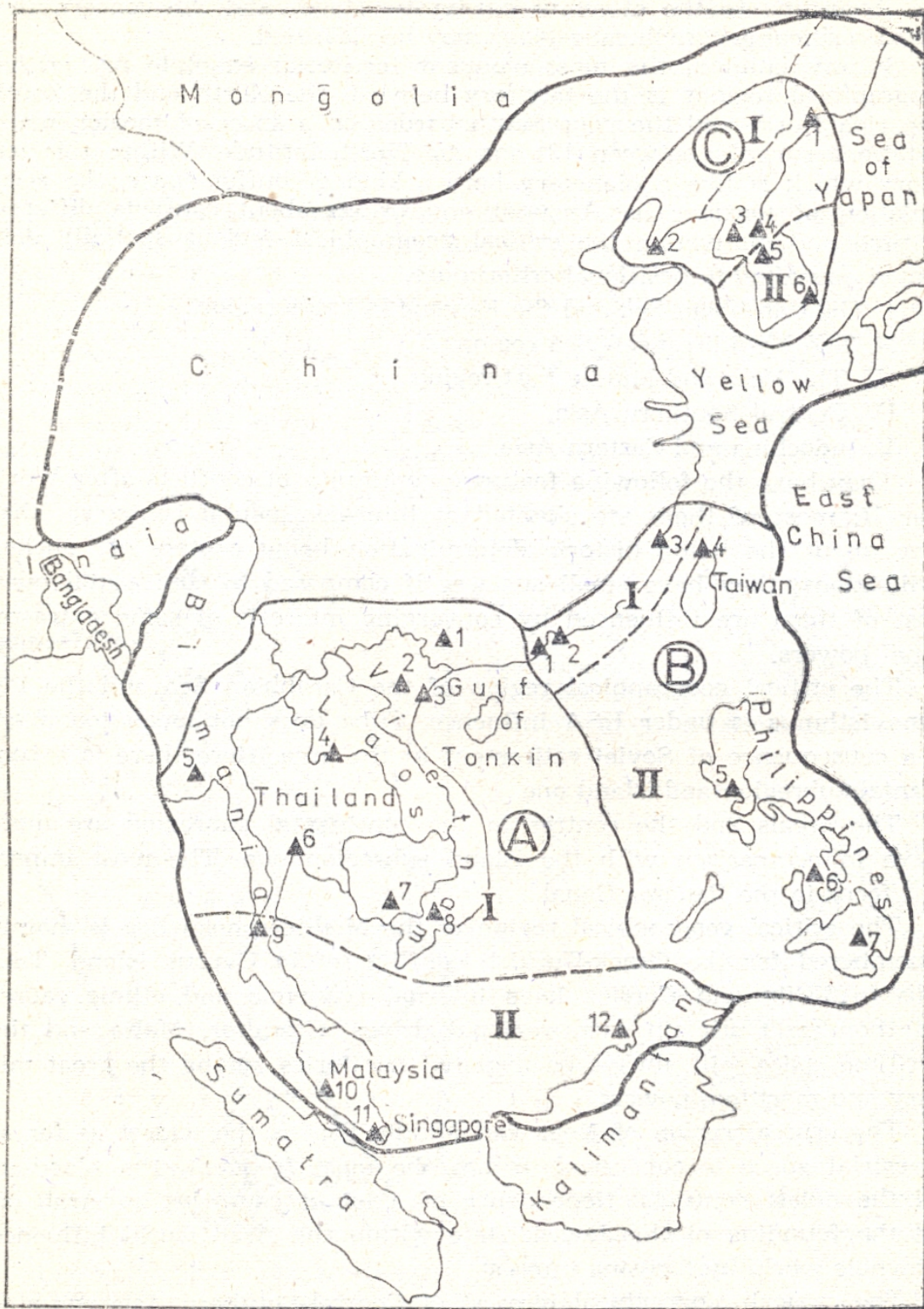


Fig. 5. Indochina and Eastern Asia. A. The Indochina subregion. I. The northern compartement, 1 - Lungtsin, 2 - Hanoi, 3 - Haiphong, 4 - Vietiane, 5 - Rangoon, 6 - Bangkok, 7 - Phnom Penh, 8 - Saigon. II. The southern compartement, 9 - Isthmus of Kra, 10 - Kuala Lumpur.

It is relatively little in space, at the borders of India, China, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The accumulated tensions have brought about conflicts only between two of these countries. But one should not forget that three of them are nuclear powers and that they all concentrate almost 40 per cent of world population.

The critical geographical region of Indochina and Eastern Asia is both in continental and island spaces. The position and strategic resources of the area will keep on interesting extraregional powers. The concern of regional powers such as Japan and China is predictable and increasing.