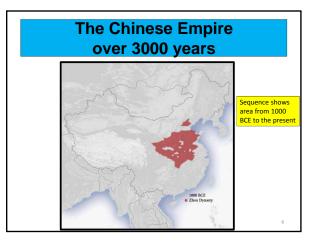


National Political Systems: Evolution of the Modern State

Political organization of space arose independently in many parts of the world.

Idea of the modern state was developed by European political philosophers in the 1700s: Concept that people owe allegiance to a state and the people it represents - NOT to its leader, such as a king or feudal lord that had been the case for thousands of years.



Challenges to the State: New Viewpoints from World Culture

State-centric view of the world is being tested from many angles as a "world culture" evolves:

- Globalization of economies and transnational corporations
- ✓ Proliferation of <u>international</u> and <u>supranational</u> <u>institutions</u>
- ✓ Emergence and multiplication of <u>non-governmental</u> <u>organizations</u> (NGOs)
- ✓ International migrations; ease and speed of travel
- ✓ Increase in <u>nationalist and separatist movements</u>
- ✓ <u>Social media</u> and the diffusion of information

KEY TERMS

Nation:

- **1.** An independent political unit holding sovereignty over a territory.
- 2. Community of people with a common culture and territory.

Usage in Cultural Geography:

A group of people with a common culture occupying a particular territory, and bound together by a strong sense of unity arising from **shared** beliefs and customs.

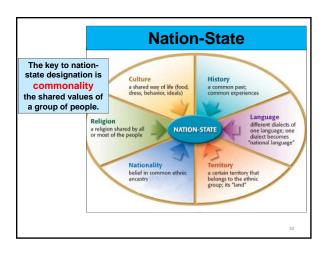
KEY TERMS

Nation-state:

A state whose area coincides with the area occupied by a distinct nation or people, or at least, whose population shares a general sense of cohesion and adherence to a set of common values

It is the goal of every group of people (culture) to govern themselves.

Very few countries can claim to be true nation-states. Japan, Poland, Egypt, Bangladesh, Iceland, Lesotho, Mongolia, Swaziland all have between 93-99% ethnic homogeneity.



MORE KEY TERMS

Bi-national or multi-national state:

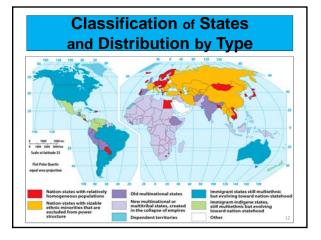
- Contains more than one nation, e.g., Switzerland, Canada

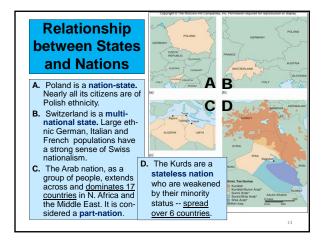
Part-nation state:

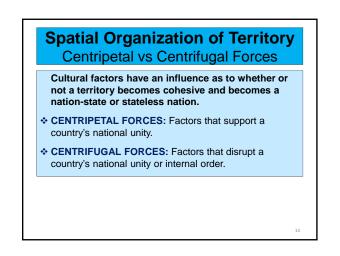
 Single nation dispersed across and predominant in two or more states, e.g., the Arab nation

Stateless nation:

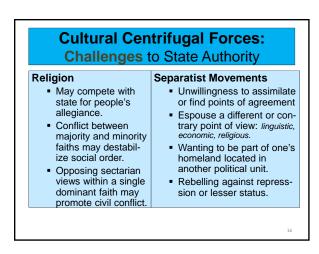
 People without a state, e.g., the Kurds, Roma, Basques and Palestinians











Cultural Centrifugal Forces: Nationalism as an Negative Variable

- Nationalism can also be a <u>challenge to unity</u> within a political unit and be a very disruptive force.
 - There are 5 aspects identified:
 - A. Sub-nationalism

Feeling that one owes primary allegiance to a traditional group (nation) rather than to the state.

B. Right to self-determination

Feeling that the group should be able to decide its own way

Cultural Centrifugal Forces C. Regionalism Minority group identification with a particular region of a state rather than with the state as a whole. May be expressed as a desire for self-government or even separation from the rest of the country. D. Separatist Movements May seek regional autonomy or complete independence based on their differences from the rest of the country.

E. Ethnic Cleansing

Tactic used to transform a multi-national area into one containing only one nation. (*Killing or forcible relocation of one traditional or ethnic group by a more powerful one.*)

Cultural Centrifugal Forces

 Cultural preconditions common to all separatist movements

Territory to control

Local nationalism

Other common cultural characteristics of separatist movements

- Peripheral location
- Social and economic inequality (real or perceived)

Geographic Characteristics of States and Relationship to Culture

Once the cultural (people) parameters are set and create a political unit, other factors kick in. We can see if a geographic area is in fact <u>viable</u> and <u>governable</u> as a political unit. The physical size, shape, and location of any one state combine to distinguish it from all other states.

These characteristics affect the power and stability of states :

✓ economic well-being

✓ exposure to the rest of the world

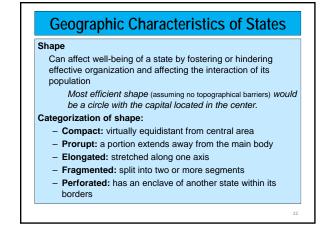
✓ ability to interact with trends and "modernizations" and to be part of any diffusion.

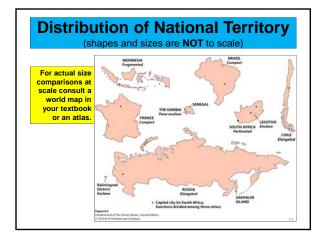
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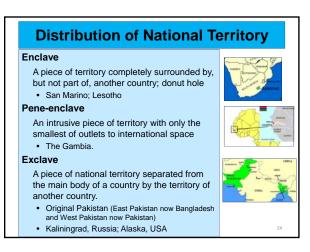
Geographic Characteristics of States

Physical Size

- Large states vs. small states have advantages and disadvantages. What are some?
- Size alone is not critical in determining a country's Largest stability and strength, but it is a contributing factor.
 World's largest country in area is Russia
 - (6.6 mil sq mi with 143 mil people) • Numerous mini-states, both area and population Singapore in Asia is 269 sq mi with 5.3 million people Andorra in Europe is 181 sq mi with 85.000 people Nauru in Oceania is 8.2 sq mi with 31,000 people Monaco in Europe is 0.77 sq mi with 31,000 people The Vatican within Rome is 0.17 sq mi with 836 people



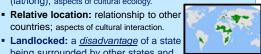




Geographic Characteristics of States

Location

• Absolute location: where on earth is it found (lat/long); aspects of cultural ecology.



- Landlocked: a <u>disadvantage</u> of a state being surrounded by other states and having no independent access to international space.
- · Location on major transportation routes: areas may benefit from access (example of relative location)
 - Economic advantages of trade.

countries; aspects of cultural interaction.

• Cultural advantages and liabilities; early receipt of new ideas and technologies but also hostile acts and outside influence.

Geopolitical Function of States

BUFFER STATE

An independent (but small and weak) country between two powerful countries: Nepal, Bhutan

SATELLITE STATE

A small, weak country dominated by a powerful neighbor to the extent that some of its independence is lost: Eastern European countries during the Cold War dominated by the USSR.

Both these situations put the residents at risk, may affect their national identity, foster separatist movements and create an artificial cultural/political environment.

