



POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY

PART I

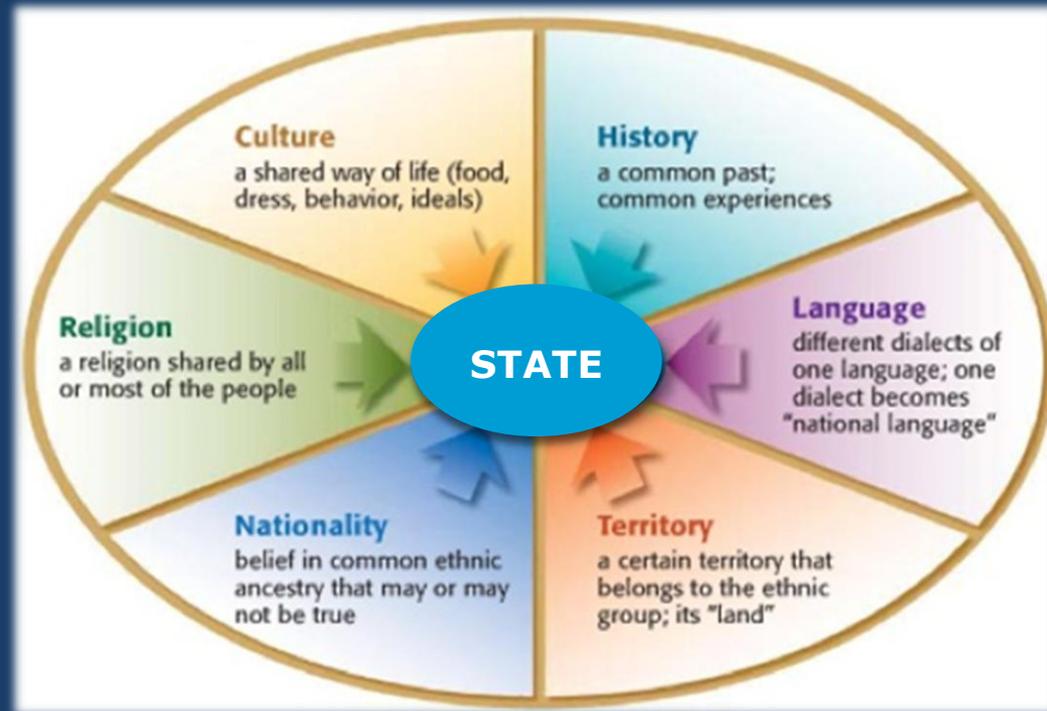
Every political system is an accumulation of habits, customs, prejudices and principles that have survived a long process of trial and error and of ceaseless response to changing circumstances. If the system works well on the whole, it is a lucky accident – the luckiest, indeed, that can befall a society.

-Edward C. Banfield



Geographic Characteristics of States

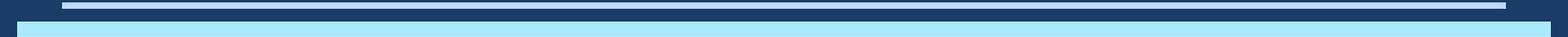
- Terms
- Number
- Size
- Shape





[Return to Table of Contents](#)

TERMS

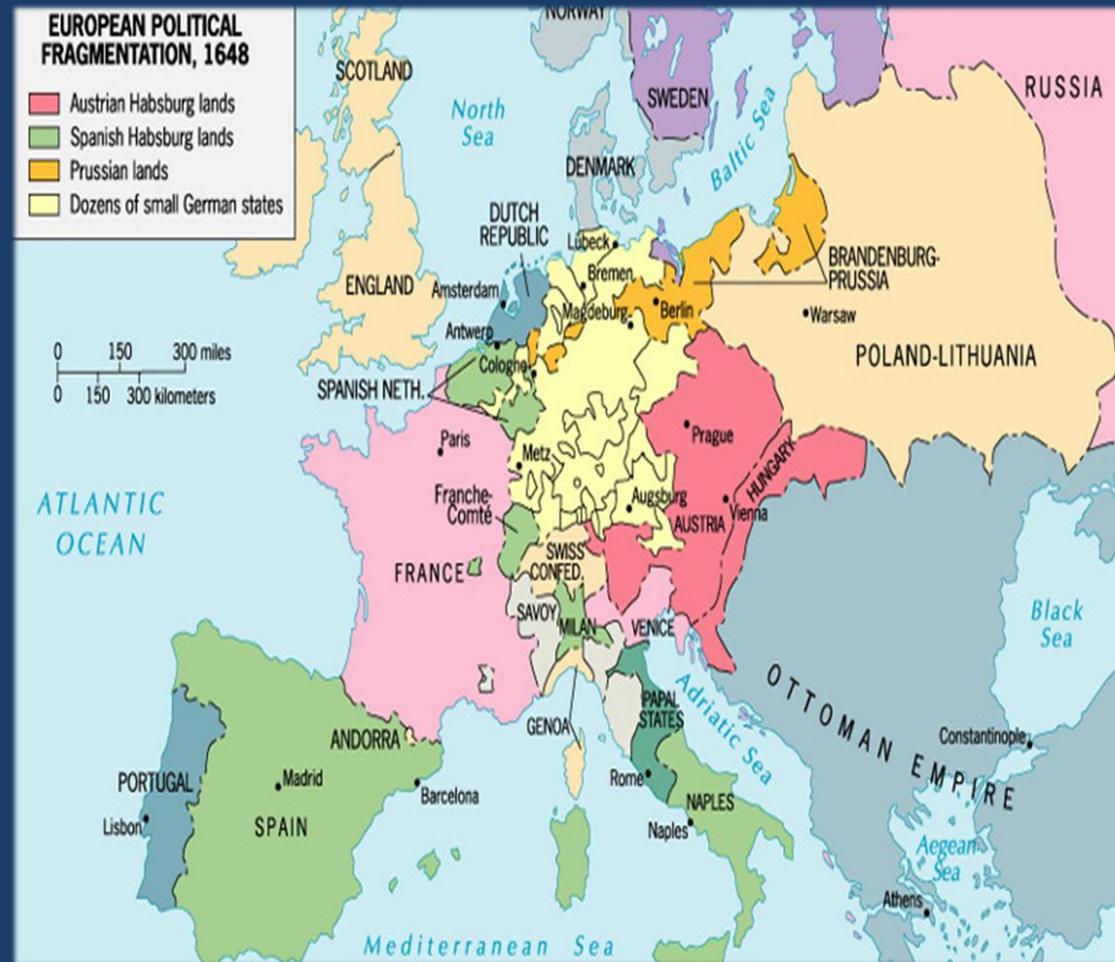




The Modern State

The states we perceive as natural and timeless are relatively recent phenomena.

In 1648, Europe was divided into dozens of small territories, most of which had been at war for 30 years.





The Modern State

The event in European history that marks the beginning of the modern state is the *Peace of Westphalia*, which ended the 30 Years War and contained new language that recognized states' sovereignty within clearly defined borders.





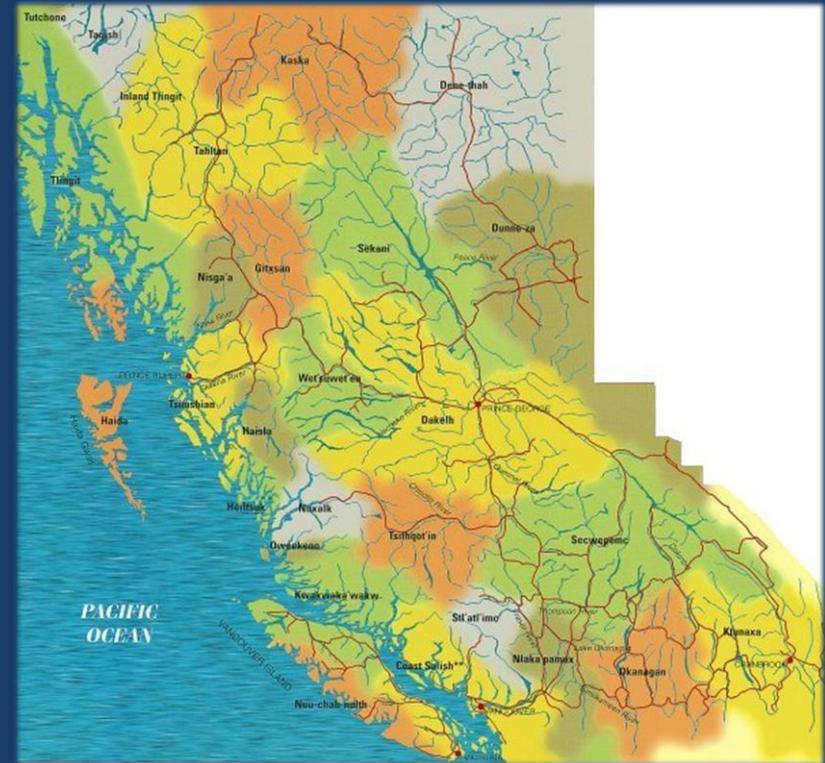
State



- ...an independent political unit holding sovereignty over a specified territory (example: Canada)
- casually referred to as "country"
- United States of America: 50 theoretically independent states that chose to join together in one state ... united states



Nation



- Geographers' definition: ...community of people with common ancestry, culture and territory
- does *not* imply an independent political unit
- Quebec, Acadians in Eastern Canada, "First Nations" throughout Canada



Comparing Nation and State

NATION

- single language
- common history
- similar ethnic background
- unity from a common political system
- emotional commitment

STATE

- clearly delineated territory
- substantial population
- well-organized government
- shared political and cultural history
- emotional ties to institutions, political system or ideology



Nation-State

- ...state whose territory coincides with the area occupied by a single nation
- Iceland: all residents of the state are members of a single Icelandic nation
- versus Canada: several different nations within the boundaries of the Canadian state

Nation State: Amalgamations of Landmass and People
(Terms are used incorrectly but ideas are good.)





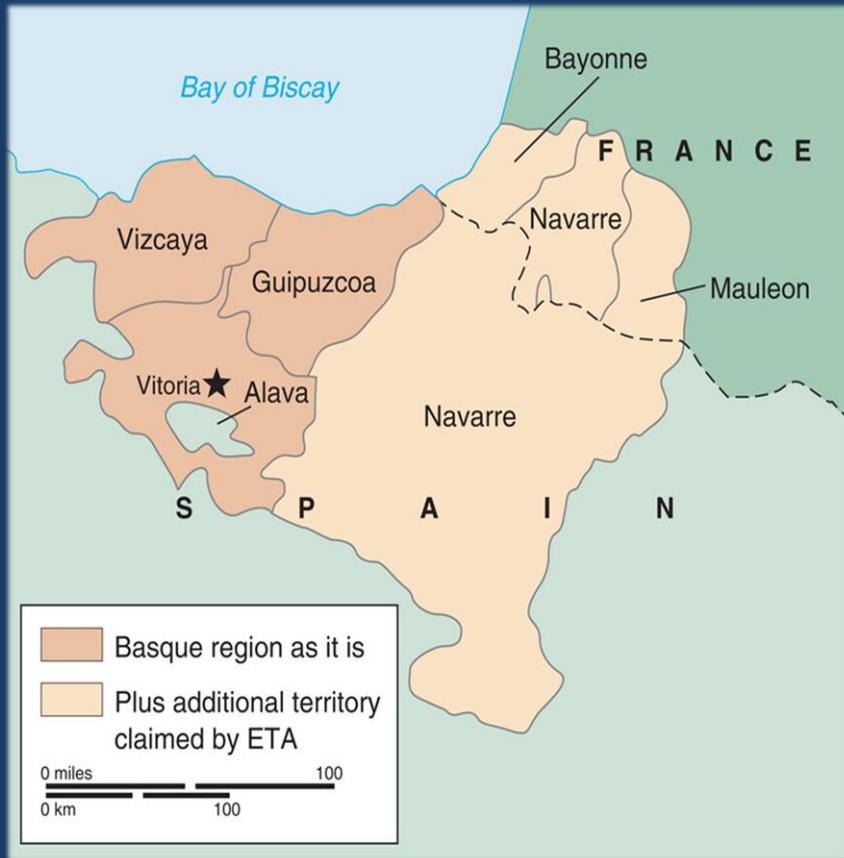
Definitional Complexities



- Poland is essentially a nation-state.
- Switzerland is a multi-national state.
- The territory of the 'Arab nation' extends over several Arab states.
- The Kurds are a stateless nation. Some Kurds are fighting for their own state, Kurdistan.



Stateless Nation



...an ethnic group (nation) that occupies territory, but does not belong to a single state

- Basques in Spain and France: Basque nationalist organizations want autonomy or independence for a Basque state. (see map)
- Kurds (see next slide)



The Kurdish Nation: Kurdistan



- 25-40 million people depending on how defined
- area $\geq 73,000$ mi²
- opposition to Ottoman Empire in WWI
- Promised independent state by UK and France (1920) but Turkey established control and was internationally recognized in 1923.
- Boundaries drawn for political, not ethnographic reasons.
- Kurds not recognized as a nation by Turkey, Iraq, Iran.
- Kurds supported US against Iraq in 2003.



Above: area claimed by Kurdish nationalist groups

Below: Kurdistan nationalist flag





Multi-Nation States

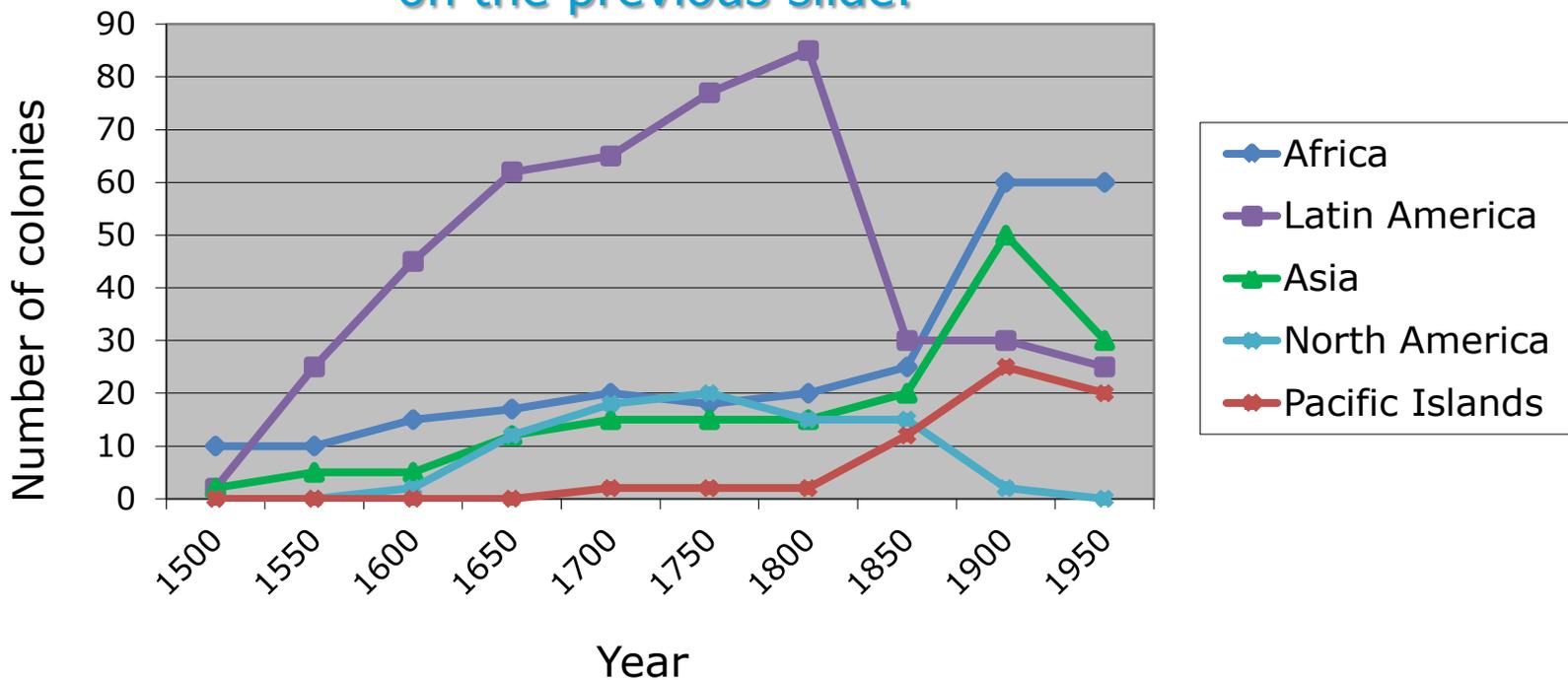
- Canada: several nations within the borders of Canadian state
- United Kingdom: Scots, English, Irish, Welsh are separate nations
- former Yugoslavia
- Western Hemisphere states
- African states (see *Scramble for Africa* slides below)





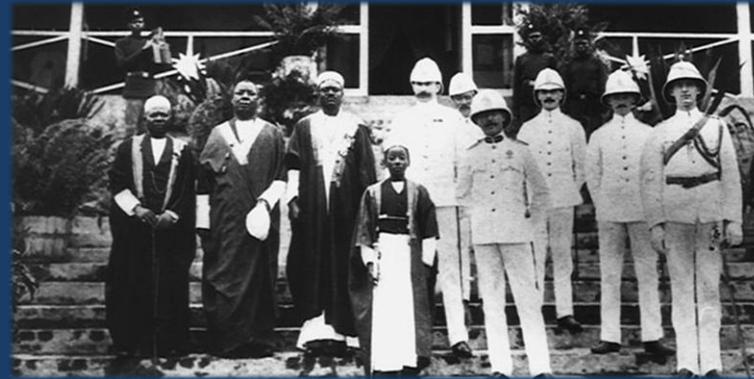
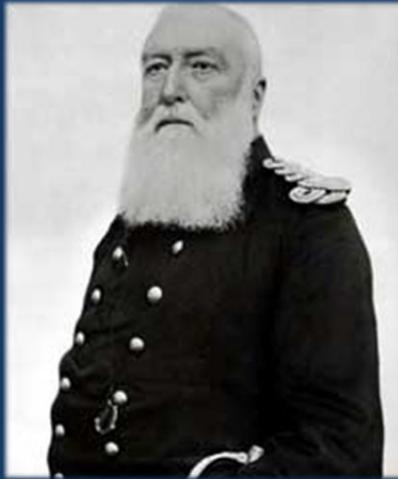
Colonized Regions of the World

Compare the information below with the list of multi-nation states on the previous slide.





The Scramble for Africa

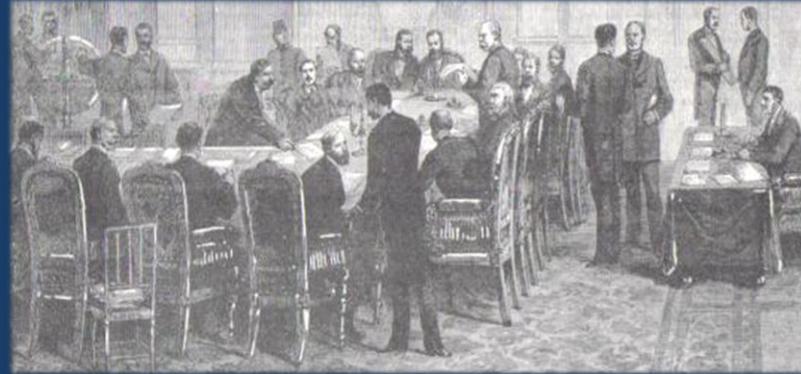


- 1870s: Belgium King Leopold begins sending emissaries to Africa to establish trade relations ... look at King Leopold's legacy of DR Congo violence
- Other European states begin to actively acquire African territory.



Berlin Conference, 1884-85

Imperial Rivalry:
a British cartoon
ridiculing Belgian
rule in Africa



- organized by Belgium and included France, Germany, Portugal United States, Austria–Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Sweden–Norway, Great Britain
 - principle of **possession via occupation** (If you occupy it, you own it.)
 - Signatory powers must give notification of *intent to occupy* to all other signatory powers.



The Scramble for Africa



Cecil Rhodes stands astride the whole of Africa.

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European-Drawn Boundaries

PARTITION OF AFRICA

1885 - 1914

Colonial Powers

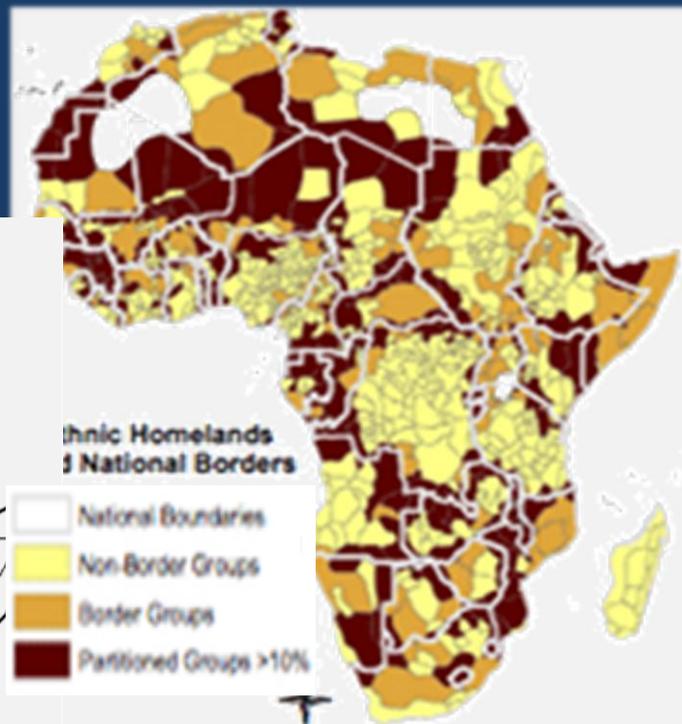
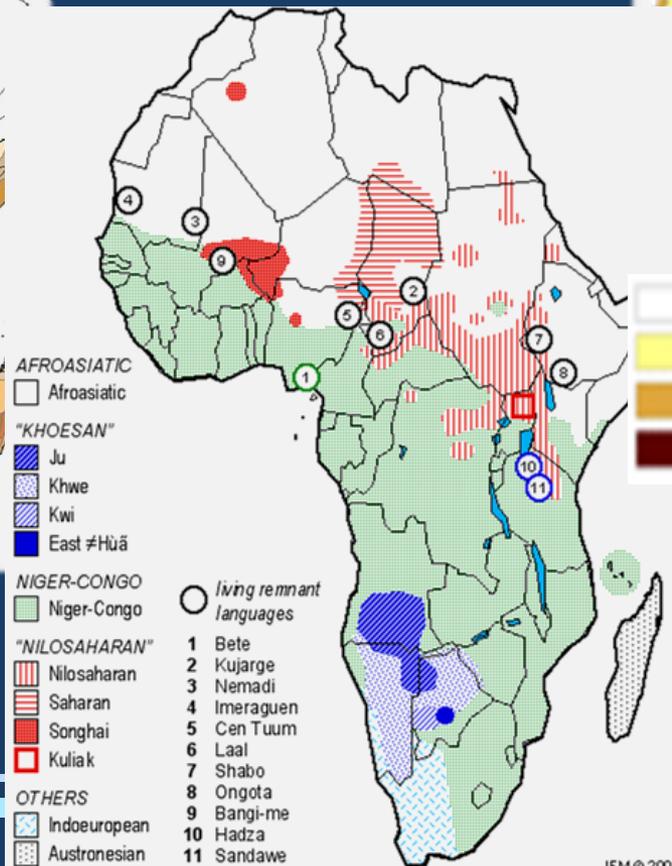
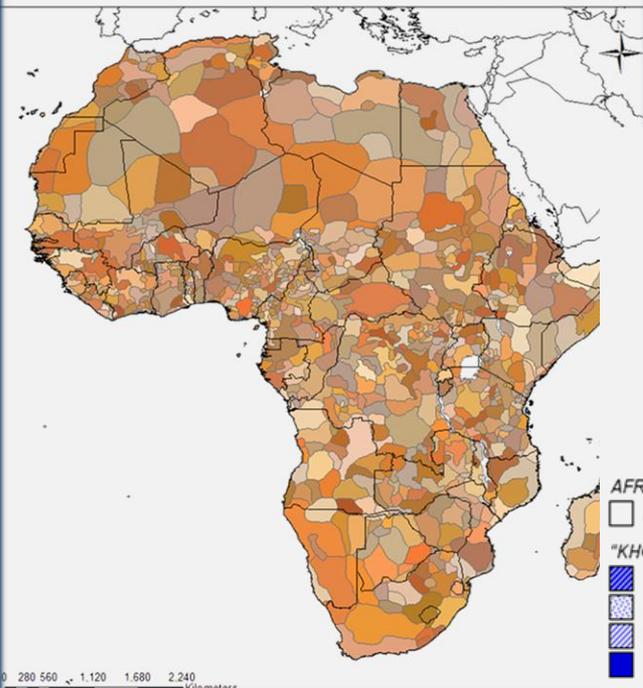
-  **British**
-  **French**
-  **German**
-  **Portuguese**
-  **Italian**
-  **Belgian**
-  **Spanish**
-  **Independent**





Compare the indigenous groupings below to the European-Drawn boundaries (states) on the previous slide.

Murdock Ethnic Map (1959)





Political Geography

Politics has historically been tied to:

- **military functions**
 - **colonization**: an ongoing process of control by which a central system of power dominates the surrounding land
 - **imperialism**: policy of extending a state's power and influence through diplomacy or military force
 - **cold war**: name given to the relationship that developed primarily between the US and the USSR after WWII



Political Geography

Politics has historically been tied to:

- **ethnocentrism**: judging another culture solely by the values and standards of one's own culture so that most other cultures are considered inferior, bad, backward, etc
- **patriarchal systems**: social system in which males hold primary power, and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property



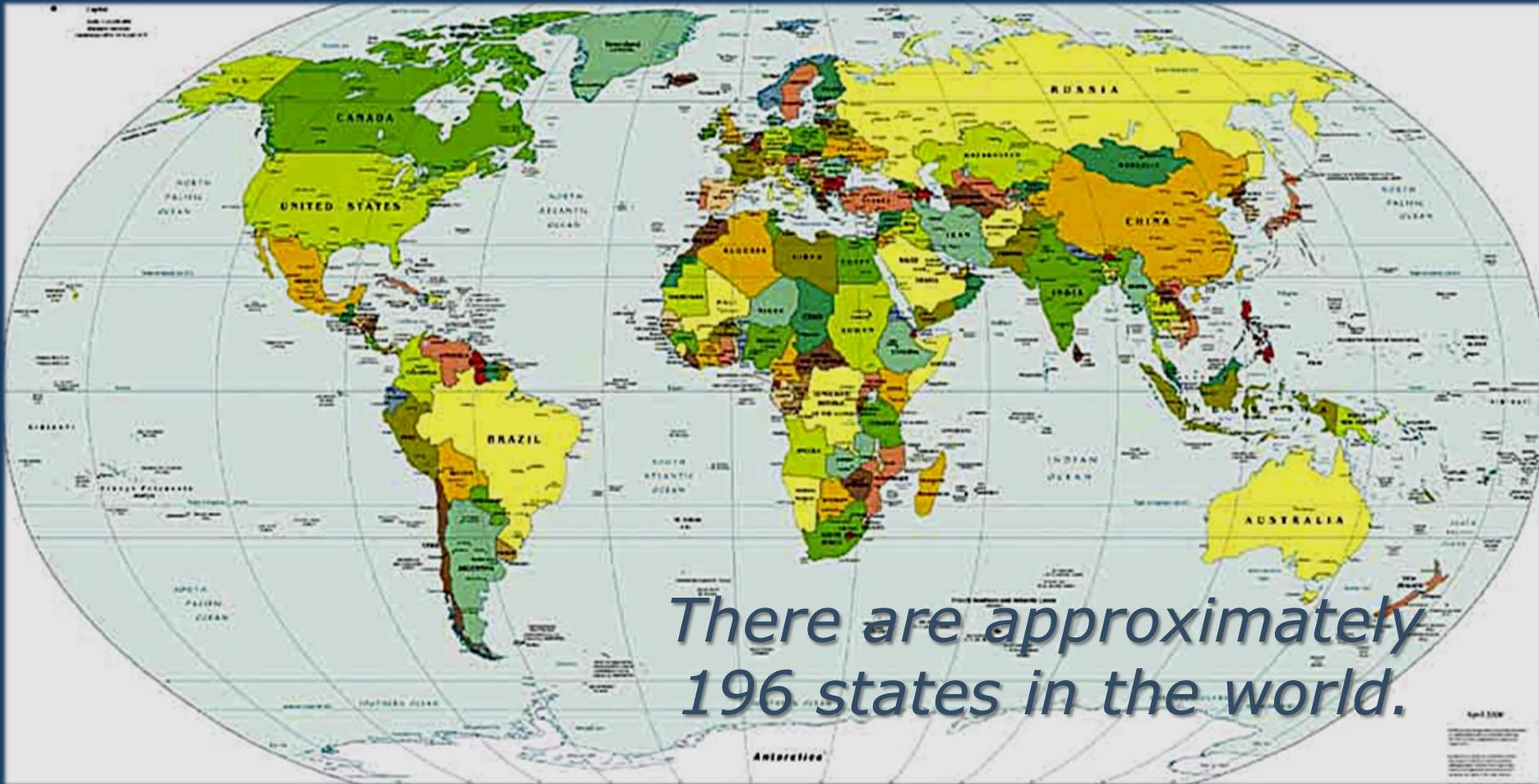


[Return to Table of Contents](#)

NUMBER



Number



*There are approximately
196 states in the world.*



SIZE

[Return to Table of Contents](#)



Size

- Size *can* be important for resources, power, governance and communication.
- In general, the larger a state, the better the chance there will be enough resources to support that state.
- However, Canada, Russia and Australia are large states with relatively small areas capable of supporting agriculture, while Japan and Singapore are small but powerful.
- A large size can also hinder the effective control of a state's people and/or resources.



The Large States

- Russia: 6.6 million miles²
 - far larger than any other state
- Canada: 3.8 million miles²
 - Canadians invented GIS to simplify mapmaking.
- China: 3.7 million miles²
- US: 3.6 million miles²
- Brazil: 3.3 million miles²
- Australia: 3 million miles²





The Microstates

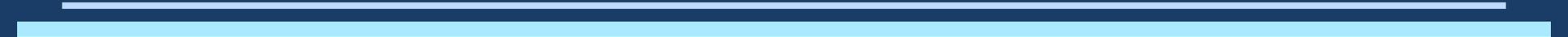
- microstate: a state less than 200 miles² (2.5 times the size of Washington, DC)
- smallest of the small
- Most are in Europe and left over from the medieval feudal period.
- examples:
 - Andorra
 - San Marino
 - Malta
 - Monaco
 - Liechtenstein
 - Vatican City





[Return to Table of Contents](#)

SHAPE





Shape

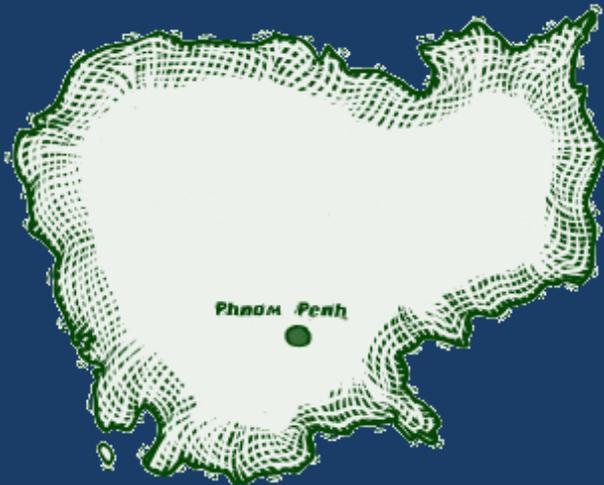
Shape can affect the well-being of a state by fostering or hindering effective organization.

- compact
- prorupted / protruded
- elongated
- fragmented
- perforated



Compact Shape

CAMBODIA



...a politico-geographic term describing a state that possesses a circular, oval or rectangular territory in which the distance from the center to any point on the boundary exhibits little variation

Communication and transportation are easier. Fosters a sense of national identity.

Cambodia, Uruguay, South Korea and Poland are examples.



Prorupted / Protruded Shape

THAILAND



...a type of territorial shape that exhibits a narrow, elongated land extension leading away from the main body of the state economically and strategically important ... requires large military presence ... much of state away from the core

Thailand, Namibia, Afghanistan and Myanmar are examples.



Prorupted State: Namibia



Germans colonized
Caprivi Strip in
1890.



Prorupted State: Afghanistan





Elongated Shape

VIETNAM



...a state whose territory is decidedly long and narrow, length at least six times greater than average width

More than likely, there are great distances, as well as various climatic, resource and culture zones. (Climate is more varied if state runs north-south.) Communication, transportation and fostering national identity are more difficult.

Chile, Vietnam and Laos are examples.



Fragmented Shape

...a state whose territory consists of several separated parts, not a contiguous whole

MALAYSIA



The individual parts may be isolated from each other by (a) the land area of other states or (b) international waters.

Makes transportation and fostering a sense of national identity more difficult.

The Philippines and Indonesia are examples.



Perforated Shape

SOUTH AFRICA



...a state whose territory completely surrounds the territory of another state so that it has a hole in it

Relationships are important (the surrounded state is always weaker).

Italy (surrounds San Marino and Vatican City) is an example but, historically, there have been few perforated states (for obvious reasons).



[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Continued in
POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY PART II