Chapter 8: Political Geography
Where Are States Distributed?

• Introducing political geography
  • State—an area organized into a political unit and ruled by an established government that has control over its internal and foreign affairs
  • Microstates—states with very small land areas
Where Are States Distributed?

• Problems of defining states
  • Almost all habitable land belongs to a country today
    • In 1940, there were about 50 countries
    • Today, there are 193 countries (as evidenced by United Nations membership)
  • Sovereignty—independence from control of its internal affairs by other states
  • Some places are difficult to classify
    • Korea: One state or two?
    • Chaina vs. Taiwan?
    • China, Taiwan, Japan and islands in the East China Sea
    • Western Sahara (Sahrawi Republic)
Why are Nation-States Difficult to Create?

• A nation-state whose territory corresponds to that occupied by a particular ethnicity
  • Ethnicities want to govern themselves
  • Examples?
Why are Nation-States Difficult to Create?

- Development of states
  - Ancient Mesopotamia and Greece
    - City-state—a sovereign state that comprises of a town and its surrounding hinterland
  - Medieval States
    - Roman Empire
  - Colonies
    - Colony—territory that is legally tied to a sovereign state rather than begin completely independent
    - Colonialism—effort by one country to establish settlements in a territory and to impose its political, economic, and cultural principles on that territory
      - “The Three Gs”
    - Imperialism vs. colonialism
      - Control of territory already occupied and organized by an indigenous society; colonialism focuses on previously uninhabited (or sparsely inhabited) land
- 20th century Europe
  - WWI and it’s aftermath
Colonial Possessions in 1914
Colonial Possessions of Early 2000

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Why are Nation-States Difficult to Create?

- Nation-states and Multinational states
  - Self-determination—ethnicities have the right to govern themselves
    - Leads to the development of nation-states
  - Multiethnic state—a state that contains more than one ethnicity
  - Multinational state—a state that contains more than one ethnicity with traditions of self-determination and self-government
- Multiethnic Revival in Europe
  - WWII, Yugoslavia
- Russia...
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Boundary—invisible line that marks the extent of a state’s territory
  • 3 types:
    • Cultural
    • Geometric*
    • Physical

• Frontier—zone where no state exercises complete political control
  • A tangible geographic area
  • Typically were uninhabited or sparsely populated
  • These have been replaced with state boundaries
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Cultural Boundaries
  • Religious
    • Examples: India and Ireland
  • Ethnic
    • Cyprus: Greeks and Turks
• Language
  • Was very common when establishing states in Europe
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Geometric Boundaries
  • Latitude and longitude (man-made lines)
  • Common in North America (US-Canada border), North Africa
• South Pole:
  • Only large landmass on Earth’s surface that is NOT part of a state
  • 7 states claim portions of the region: Argentina, Australia, Chile, France, New Zealand, Norway, U.K.
  • Recognized??
  • For what reason can state’s establish claims here? What is excluded?
• North Pole:
  • Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Russia, and USA all have conflicting claims to the region
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Physical Boundaries
  • Landforms
    • Deserts, Mountains, Water
  • Law of the Sea: 3 types of water boundaries, recognized by 165 states
    • Territorial waters
    • Contiguous zone
    • Exclusive economic zone
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Shapes of states
  • Five basic shapes
    • Compact = efficient
    • Elongated = potential isolation
    • Prorupted = access or disruption
    • Perforated = South Africa
    • Fragmented = problematic

• Landlocked states
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Governing States
  • National Scale: Regime Types
    • Democracy—citizens elect leaders and can run for office
    • Autocracy—run according to the interest of the ruler rather than the people
    • Anocracy—not fully democratic or autocratic, mix of both
  • Democracies vs. autocracies: selection of leaders, citizen participation, and checks and balances
  • Local Scale: Unitary and Federal States
    • Unitary—places most power in the hands of central government officials
    • Federal—allocates strong power to units of local government within the country
Why Do Boundaries Cause Problems?

• Electoral Geography
  • United States
    • Legislative district boundaries for voting; these can and will change based on changes in population
    • Gerrymandering—redrawing legislative boundaries to benefit the party in power
      • Illegal but not corrected
      • 3 types:
        • Wasted vote—opposition supporters are spread across many districts, but are a minority
        • Excess vote—opposition supporters are concentrated into a few districts
        • Stacked vote—distant areas of like-minded voters are linked through oddly shaped boundaries
      • P. 290-292
Gerrymandering:
Where Do States Face Threats?

• Global Cooperation and Competition
  • The United Nations
    • Meant to be a diplomatic peace keeping organization for all countries
  • The Cold War
    • Balance of power—condition of equal strength between opposing alliances
    • 2 main super powers:
      • North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): USA, Canada, and allies in Europe
        • Purpose was to prevent the Soviet Union from overrunning West Germany and other small countries
        • Membership has expanded today, less of a focus on military, more about economic stability
      • Warsaw Pact: Soviet Union and other Communist Eastern European countries
        • Provided the Soviet Union with a buffer of allied states between it and Germany to discourage a third German invasion of the Soviet Union in the 20th century
        • Disbanded in 1991
Where Do States Face Threats?

• Global Cooperation and Competition
  • European Union (EU)
    • Originally meant for healing the scars from WWII
    • Currently: economic and political cooperation
  • Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON)
    • Disbanded in 1991
  • Other regional organizations
    • OSEC (est. 1965)
    • OAS (est. 1962)
    • AU (est. 1963)
    • The Commonwealth
Where Do States Face Threats?

• **Terrorist Attacks**
  • Terrorism—type systematic use of violence by a group calculated to create an atmosphere of fear and alarm among a population or to coerce a government into actions it would not otherwise undertake or refrain from actions it wants to take
    • Terror comes from Latin= “to frighten”
    • Types of actions:
      • Bombing, kidnapping, hijacking, hostages, assassination
      • Aimed at ordinary civilians rather than military or political targets
    • Purpose and beliefs of terrorists:
      • Violence brings widespread publicity to goals that aren’t being addressed through peace
      • Will attempt to accomplish act of terrorism/goal without a fear of death
Where Do States Face Threats?

• Terrorist Attacks
  • 2000: 1,000 incidents; 3,500 deaths
  • 2013: 10,000 incidents; 18,000 deaths
  • The majority of the incidents and fatalities have occurred in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Syria

• Terrorism Against Americans
  • Foreign and domestic incidents, sometimes acted out by individuals or individuals associated with an organization

• Major Terrorist Organizations
  • Al-Qaeda
    • Jihad, fatwa
  • Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL)
  • Boko Haram
    • #BringBackOurGirls
Where Do States Face Threats?

• State support for terrorism
  • Three increasing levels of involvement
    • Providing sanctuary
      • Afghanistan (Taliban government) and Pakistan
    • Supplying weapons, money, and intelligence to terrorists
      • Iraq and Iran
    • Using terrorists to plan attacks
      • Libya