

II. States + Nations

A. States

- 1 Political Geographers use the term state to refer to countries
- 2 In political geography, then, a state is a political unit with a permanent population, territorial boundaries that are recognized by other states, an effective government, a working economy, and sovereignty.

B. Nations

- 1 Political geographers use the term nation to refer to a group of people who share a common culture and identity as a cohesive group.
- 2 Language, religion, a shared history, and territory are cultural elements that can create such cohesion and form a nation.
- 3 Internal differences often exist within a people who consider themselves nations. (Sense of belonging can sometimes override them.)
Ex) Cherokee have own traits but also feel belonging to Native Americans.
- 4 People are often willing to fight on behalf of their national identity.

5. Conflict occurring between nations is referred to as ethnonational conflict.

C. Multinational States vs. Nation-States

1. Multinational States have more than one nation within their borders.

Ex) Soviet Union: Chechens, Belarusians, Ukrainians, etc.

2. Nation-State is a state with only one nation

Ex) Japan, Iceland are the closest

D. History of Nation-State

1. Humans have organized political space in different forms throughout their existence.

2. Early humans organized into clans, tribes, and villages.

3. When these small groups were conquered, they were combined to form kingdoms and empires.

4. Ancient Greeks and Romans created city-states, in which political space revolved around a central city and surrounding farmland.

5. After the fall of the Romans around 500 CE, European territory was divided into non-centralized, feudal structure, loosely based on grouping territories by religion.

6. In about the 1500's, many Western European places began integrating these feudal structures into more centralized kingdoms.

7. Feudal states began to fade away in England + France as strong monarchy emerged.

8. With stronger monarchy's came more internal cohesion in the political organization, which led to the rise of nation-states, more cohesive group of people linked to their territory through a shared gov + goals.

9. This pattern of integration into nation-states diffused throughout Europe and became a common goal through WWI.

10. The idea of linking people who share a strong sense of unity (a nation) under one government seemed to be the best way to prevent ethnoreligious violence from erupting, as it did in both the World Wars.

E Stateless nations

1. When a nation does not have a territory to call its own, it is referred to as a stateless nation.

Ex) Assyrians of Iraq

Ex2) Kurds of Mid East