# **Territorial Morphology**

# Territorial Morphology DRKKMISHRA

Relationship between a state's geographic shape, size, relative location, and it's political situation

### Shape of states

- Controls the length of its boundaries with other states
  - Shape affects potential for communication and conflict with neighbors
- Shape is part of its identity
- Shape can determine the difficulty or ease of internal administration and social unity

- 5 basic shapes
  - Compact
  - Elongated
  - Prorupted
  - Perforated
  - Fragmented

# **Compact States**

### Definition:

- the distance from the center to any boundary does not vary significantly
  - Theoretically would be shaped in a circle or square
- Capital at center and shortest boundaries to defend
- Often the political ideal
- Compactness is a beneficial characteristic for most smaller states
  - Good for communications
  - Does not necessarily means peace



# **Elongated States**

### **Definition:**

states with long and narrow shape

### Problems:

- May suffer from poor internal communications and transporation
- Region at north or south end may be isolated
- Capital may lose influence over one end of the elongation

### Examples:





### **Prorupted States**

### • Definition:

- Also called protruded
  - compact state with large protruding extension
- Proruptions created for two reasons
  - Can provide access to a resource
  - Separate two states that would otherwise share a boundary
- Problems

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- Protruding piece might be separated from core
- Examples:
  - Congo, Namibia, Afghanistan, Thailand



# **Perforated States**

### • Definition:

- A state that completely surrounds another one
  - "has a hole punched out"

### Problems

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 Relationship between the perforated state and perforating state can cause tension

### Example

- South Africa
  - Completely surrounds state of Lesotho
    - Depends entirely on South Africa for import and export of goods



### **Fragmented States**

#### Definition:

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- includes several discontinuous pieces of territory
  - Most extreme example
    - Indonesia
- Problems
  - Maintaining unity
- Two kinds of fragmented states
  - Those with areas separated by wate.
    - Tanzania, Indonesia
  - Those separated by an intervening state
    - Angola, Russia, Panama, India



# Landlocked States

- Lacks a direct route to the sea
  because it is completely
  surrounded by several other
  countries
- Most common in Africa

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- 14 countries landlocked
- Remnant of colonial era
  - Built railroads, but now they run through several independent countries

- Direct access to ocean is critical for trading
  - Must use another country's seaport



### **Internal Political Organization of States**

- A state's size and cultural composition are also factors in its political situation and internal organization
- States are smaller in geographic size and population may be more politically unified, but not always
  - Microstate is a very small state
    - Such as Singapore
  - Often have a unitary government structure

- The governments of states are organized according to one of two approaches
  - Unitary state
    - Power is concentrated in the central government
  - Federal state
    - Allocates strong power to units of local government within the country

# Unitary vs. Federal

#### Unitary state

- Works best in nation-states with few cultural differences
  - Strong sense of unity
- Requires effective communications
  - Smaller states more likely to adopt it
    - Common in Europe
- Some multinational states have adopted it
  - Can impose value of nationality
    - Kenya, Rwanda

### Federal state

- Federal states have local governments that adopt their own laws
  - Can empower nationalities in multinational states
  - Different names
    - States, provinces, estados
- Suitable for larger states
  - United States, Russia, Canada, Brazil, India
  - Where capital is far away
- Size doesn't matter though
  - Belgium= federal
  - China= unitary

# **Confederation Structure**

### Definition

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- Structure in which a weak central government exists with regional governments holding the majority of power
- Or a group of states united for a common purpose
  - Articles of Confederation was the first document binding together the 13 American colonies
  - Confederacy during Civil War



### **Trend toward Federal Government**

In recent years there has been a strong global trend toward Federal government.

#### France

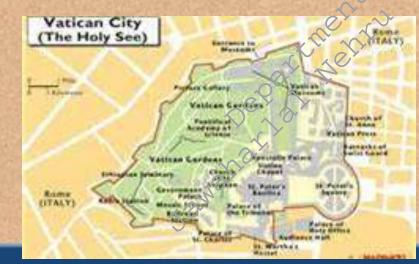
- Good example of nation-state
  - Long tradition of Unitary government
- Recently giving more authority to departments and communes

- Poland
  - Switched from Unitary to Federal government after fall of Communist rule
    - Lack of local government led to breakdown of infrastructure
  - 1999 adopted a three-tier system of local government
  - Transition difficult
    - Lack of experience
    - Thousands of positions

# **Political Enclaves and Exclaves**

### **Enclaves**

- Territorial enclave is a state, or part of a state, surrounded completely by another state
  - Lesotho is an enclave surrounded by South Africa
  - West Berlin was an enclave within the state of East Germany



#### Exclaves

- When an enclave is land that is a political extension of another state, then it is called an exclave
  - Alaska is an exclave of the United States because it is cut off from the rest of the country by Canada

