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

•

- 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

•

•

 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:

•

- 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

۲

- 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

•

- 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

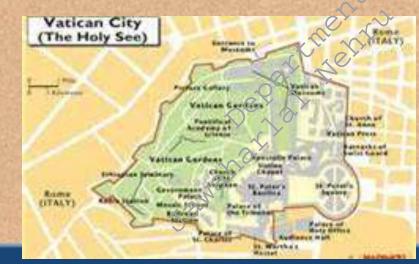
- Good example of nation-state
 - Long tradition of Unitary government
- Recently giving more authority to departments and communes

- 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

