

What we mean when we talk about

# NATION-STATES

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# Nation-States in a Globalized World

- Before we can start talking about globalization, we need to define the basics.

States

Nations

# What is a **State**?

- An organized community living under a single government which has exclusive control over its own territory
- States are responsible for their citizens' welfare

Health

Security

Opportunity

# What is a **Nation**?

- A nation is a people who share similar cultural characteristics including

Language

Customs

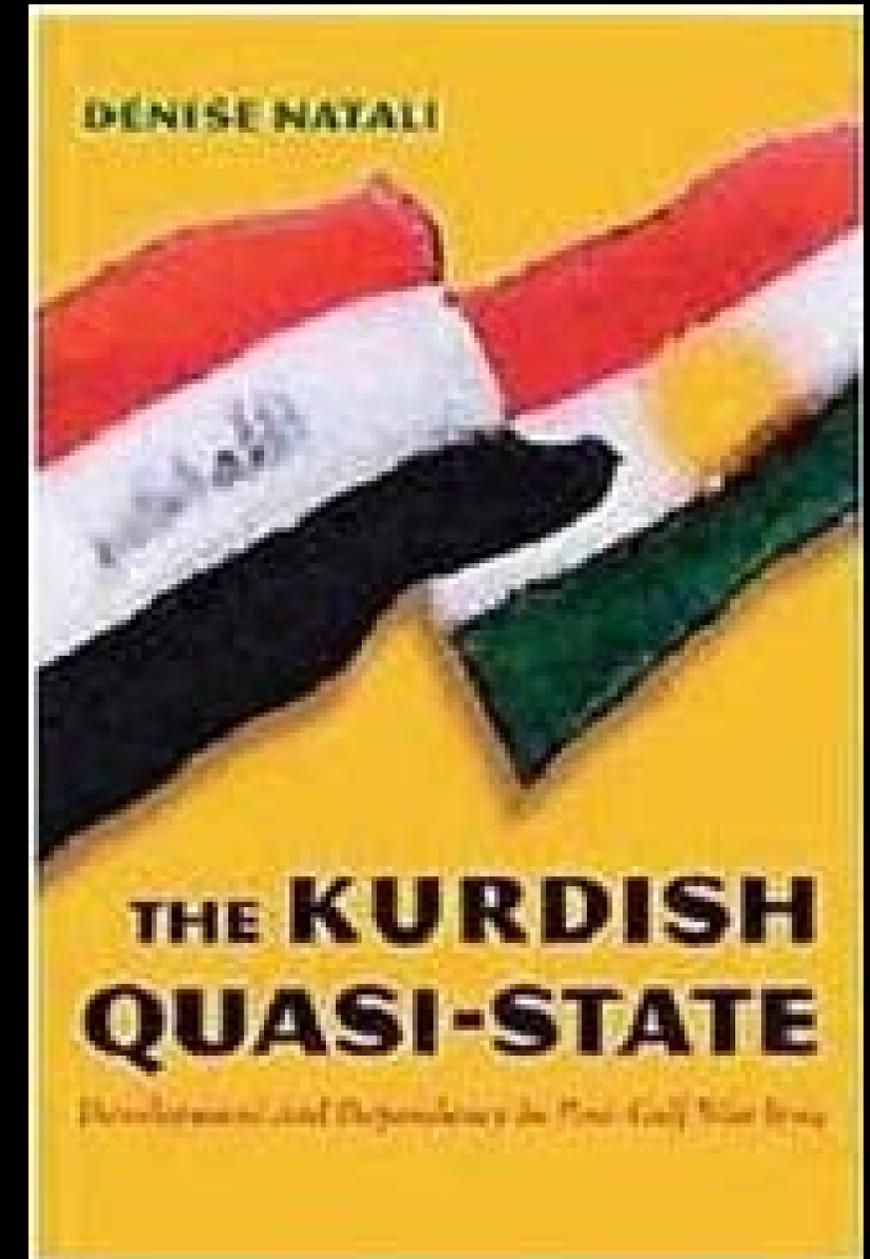
Religion

Ancestry

Origin

History

- Not all “nations” of people have states in which they are the majority or whose culture is dominant



# Case Study: **the Kurds**

- a minority ethnic group inhabiting the areas shown at right

- a nation that shares

a common **language**,  
cultural **customs**, and  
a distinct **history**

- However, they do not have a state in which they are dominant



# What is a **Nation-State**?

- a political state whose borders encompass the entirety of a nation
- Nation-states typically have a majority “nation” whose culture is predominant
- People who live in the nation-state are citizens whose rights are protected by the state
- *Where do nation-states come from?*

# Origin of the Nation-State

A historical map of Europe, likely from the 17th or 18th century, showing various territories and borders. The map is color-coded, with green highlighting several regions including parts of Central and Eastern Europe, and the Italian peninsula. Labels on the map include 'OF HABSBURG' in the top left, 'RUSSIA' in the top right, 'SAXONY' in the north, 'MORAVIA' in the center, 'BOHEMIA' in the north-central, 'CZECHIA' in the north-east, 'SLOVAKIA' in the east, 'POLAND' in the east, 'ITALY' in the south, 'SARDINIA' in the south-west, and 'CORSIKA' in the south-west. The map shows a complex network of borders and territories, reflecting the fragmented nature of Europe at that time.

- Originated in Europe between 1450 and 1650.
- Prior to this, the world was a mix of empires and feudal territories that included many different ethnic groups
- Example: the Spanish empire
- Borders were very undefined

# Origin of the Nation-State

- Warfare was almost constant between areas of mixed control and “gray areas” on the edges of large empires
- Example: Thirty Years’ War
- People living in these places weren’t citizens for which the state was responsible
- Personal allegiance to a local noble

# War's Effects on the Nation-States

- War during the period 1450-1650 started to become much more expensive than in the previous centuries

European  
Colonization

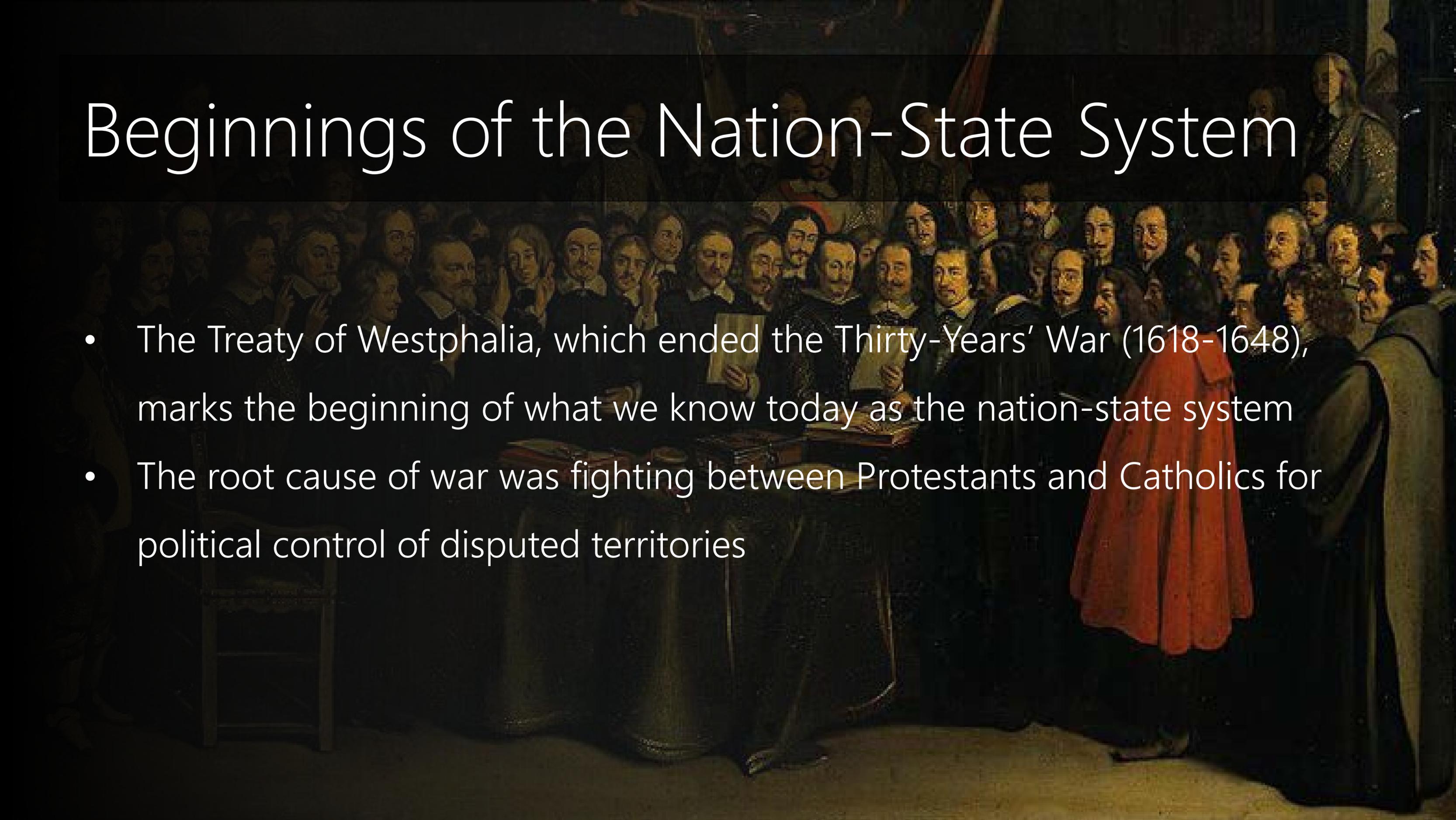
Bigger Armies  
and Navies

More Taxes to  
fund the Military

# War's Effects on the Nation-States

- States started to look more "modern"
  - States became more independent from the king (or, very rarely, the queen)
  - Some even became republics and democracies\*
- War tended to make citizens of a state see one another as having common histories, languages, and in need of common protection

# Beginnings of the Nation-State System



- The Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty-Years' War (1618-1648), marks the beginning of what we know today as the nation-state system
- The root cause of war was fighting between Protestants and Catholics for political control of disputed territories

# What did the Treaty of Westphalia Say?

- Two major ideas were made into law by the Treaty of Westphalia:

Sovereignty

Citizenship

- State borders were rigidly defined
- States also became the main unit for international diplomacy

# Sovereignty

- The quality of having independent authority over a geographic territory and the population of that territory
- This was intended to limit conflict between states over borders and control at the edges of states
- States promised to recognize each others' authority over their own people and territory
- Hasn't always worked out that way!

# Sovereignty

- For a state to be sovereign, it has to be recognized by other states
- Obtaining recognition can be highly political!
- States might deny or grant recognition for their own political goals
- Example: 
  - Some states recognize Taiwan as an independent state, but others do not
- Why might states do this?

# Citizenship

- The Treaty stated that states claimed responsibility for their citizens' behavior
- In the original treaty, this meant that they wouldn't let their citizens start trouble abroad!
- This laid the groundwork for the idea that states should also protect the rights of their own citizens against other states
- Like sovereignty, this hasn't always worked out either!

# Who enforces the Westphalia rules?

- States are the main enforcers of the rules
- International law
  - Treaties
  - International Governmental Organizations
- Why are some states more capable of protecting their sovereignty than others?

# Who enforces the Westphalia rules?

- However, states are the main violators of sovereignty!
- Powerful states use political and economic pressure to change other state's behavior
- In what situations is it acceptable for a state to violate another state's sovereignty?

# From Westphalia to WWII

- Taking a long view of history, the “Westphalian system” has been a major success!
  - Defined borders
  - Limited state intervention
  - Citizen welfare

# From Westphalia to WWII

- The number of states has risen and fallen with the growth and decline of large empires
- After WWII, when large areas of Latin America, Africa, and Asia became independent from European control, more states were created
- Today, there are around 192 recognized states in the world
- But not every state agrees on this number!

# The Challenge of Globalization

- In today's globalized world, there are many new political and economic arrangements. Four main areas of emphasis:

Multinational Corporations

Intergovernmental Organizations

Regional Power Blocs

Non-State Political Actors

# Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

- MNCs are large businesses, registered in one state, that have operations in more than one state
- MNCs are often said to have “no allegiance” to a state
- Thanks to advances in technology, investment dollars and business operations can be quickly moved anywhere in the world
- Globalization!

# Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

- MNCs move to select locations where they can make the most profit
- Often this is at the expense of poorer countries and their most vulnerable citizens
- MNCs relocate from one state to another to find lower labor and environmental standards
- States change their policies to accommodate MNCs wishes
- This makes it difficult for states to provide for their citizens' welfare

# Intergovernmental Organizations

- Public or government organization created by a treaty or agreement between two or more states
- IGOs exist to coordinate states' political and economic goals
- How many states are involved in the
  - United Nations?
  - International Criminal Court?
  - World Trade Organization?

# Intergovernmental Organizations

- IGOs provide forums for coordinating action, discussing issues, and gathering information
- They often give small states a way to advance their interests they would not otherwise have

# Regional Power Blocs

- Often based on common national groups embracing multiple states
- Examples:
  - E.U.
  - African Union
  - Arab League
- In what ways are regional power blocs different from nation-states?

# Intergovernmental Organizations

- IGOs are sometimes controversial
- They may interfere with state sovereignty
- Large states often use them to obstruct the political and economic goals of weaker states
- What examples of sovereignty issues in IGOs can you think of?

# Non-State Political Actors

- The freer movement of money, ideas, and worldviews means new groups can try to influence the state outside government channels
- Non-state political actors include, but are not limited to,:
  - Terrorist groups
  - Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

# Non-State Political Actors

## Positives

- Forums for citizen voices in state policy-making
- Allow for social movements worldwide to coordinate their actions
- Advance agendas for human rights, the environment, etc.

# Non-State Political Actors

## Negatives

- Groups undermine the legitimacy of the state
- As non-state actors, it is difficult for states to control their activities
- States may be punished by other states for the actions of groups over which they have no control

# What's next for the Nation-State?

- Nation-states will have to adjust to a globalized world
- Some scholars say that the state is losing its importance
- Still, states have a great deal of power

# The future of Nation-States

- What will the globe look like in 20 years?
- 50 years?
- Will the nation-state system be more or less stable?
- Will regional power blocs become the new states?