What we mean when we talk about

NATION-STATES

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

• 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
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
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.
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!
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?
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?