

Contemporary Issues in Comparative Politics

Dr. Kerem Öge

Lecturer

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3

A011

Email: k.oge@uwtsd.ac.uk

Last Week

- Introduction
- What is Comparative Politics?
- Asking “Why”?
- Comparative Theories
- Comparative Methods
- Causation vs Correlation
- Is Comparative Politics a Science?

WEEK 2

- Characteristics of Modern States
- Traditional Functions of States
- Why Did States Emerge and Expand?
- Identity
- Nationalism and the Nation
- What Causes Ethno-national Conflict?
- Secessionist Movements

Modern State

- The term “state” refers to some large political units (or polities) which first developed in the modern West.
- In spite of their differences, they share some aspects which justify calling them “states”.
- What are these fundamental aspects? What is a state?
- How did we end up with states?

Modern State - Concepts

- The Modern State

- The most important form of political organization in modern politics.

- Three features :

- territory,

- people,

- and sovereignty.



- Max Weber's Definition:

- A compulsory political organisation with continuous operations will be called a 'state' insofar as its administrative staff successfully uphold the claim to the **monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force** in the enforcement of its order.

Concepts

- State Capacity

- The ability of the state to achieve its objectives:
 - Control violence
 - Tax the population (as needed for public functions)
 - Maintain institutions and rule of law
- Is this definition static?

- Failed States

- *State that cannot or does not perform its expected functions*
(this is also a basic lack of “state capacity”)
- Examples?

Characteristics of Modern States

Characteristics of modern states (in ideal form):

- **Bureaucracy**

- A form of organization that has individuals operating and working under established, specified, and often complex rules. Foreign Ministry. Military.

- **Impersonality**

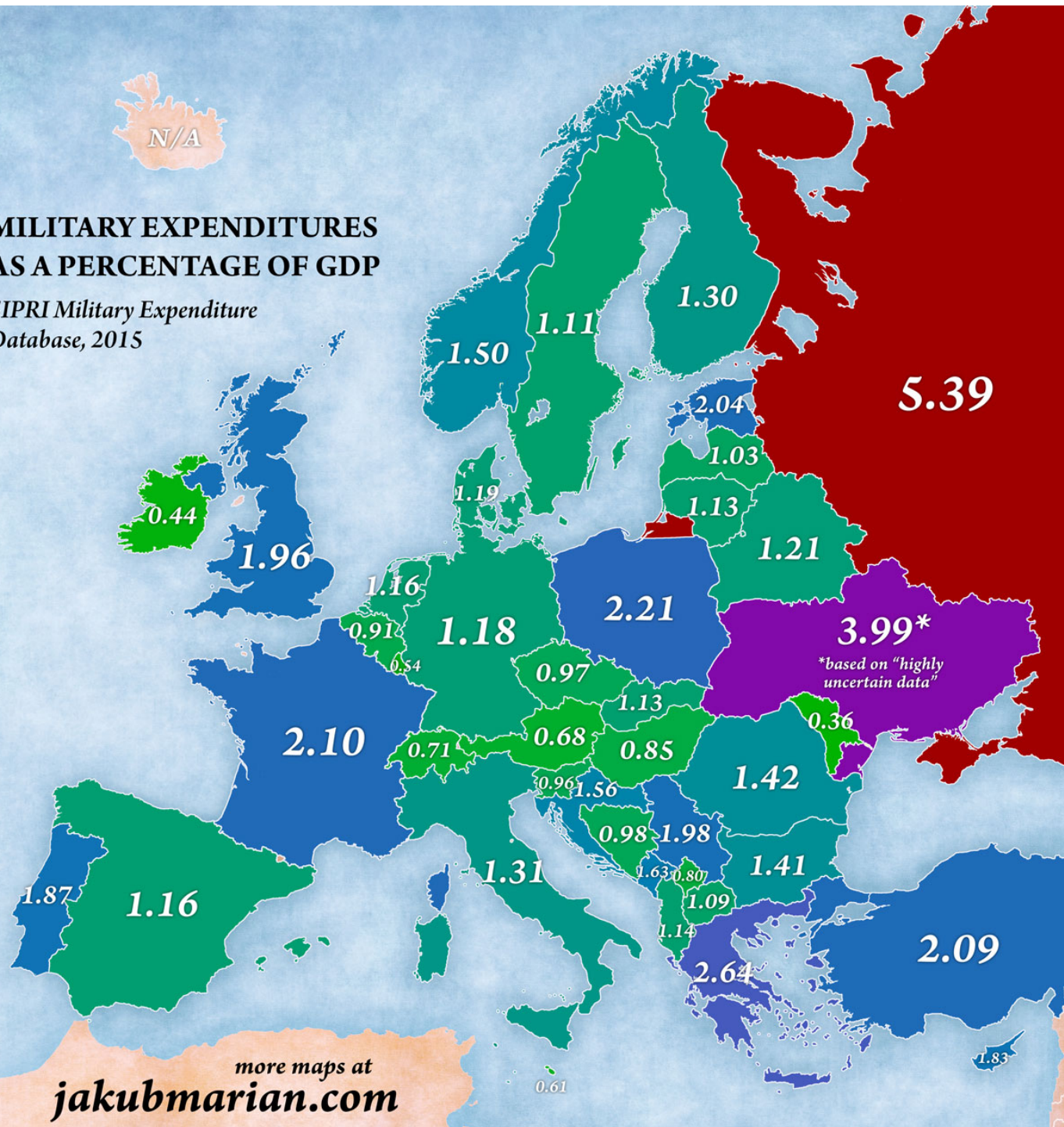
- States identified with institutions rather than the personalities of their leaders. Kim Jong-un? Trump?

- **Sovereignty**

- States are the ultimate authority within their specifically demarcated territories. What are the limitations? What happens when states voluntarily give up their sovereignties?

MILITARY EXPENDITURES AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP

SIPRI Military Expenditure
Database, 2015



*based on "highly uncertain data"

more maps at
jakubmarian.com

Expenditure

36.0

13.0

4.1

3.8

3.3

3.3

2.9

2.7

2.4

2.2

1.7

1.5

1.4

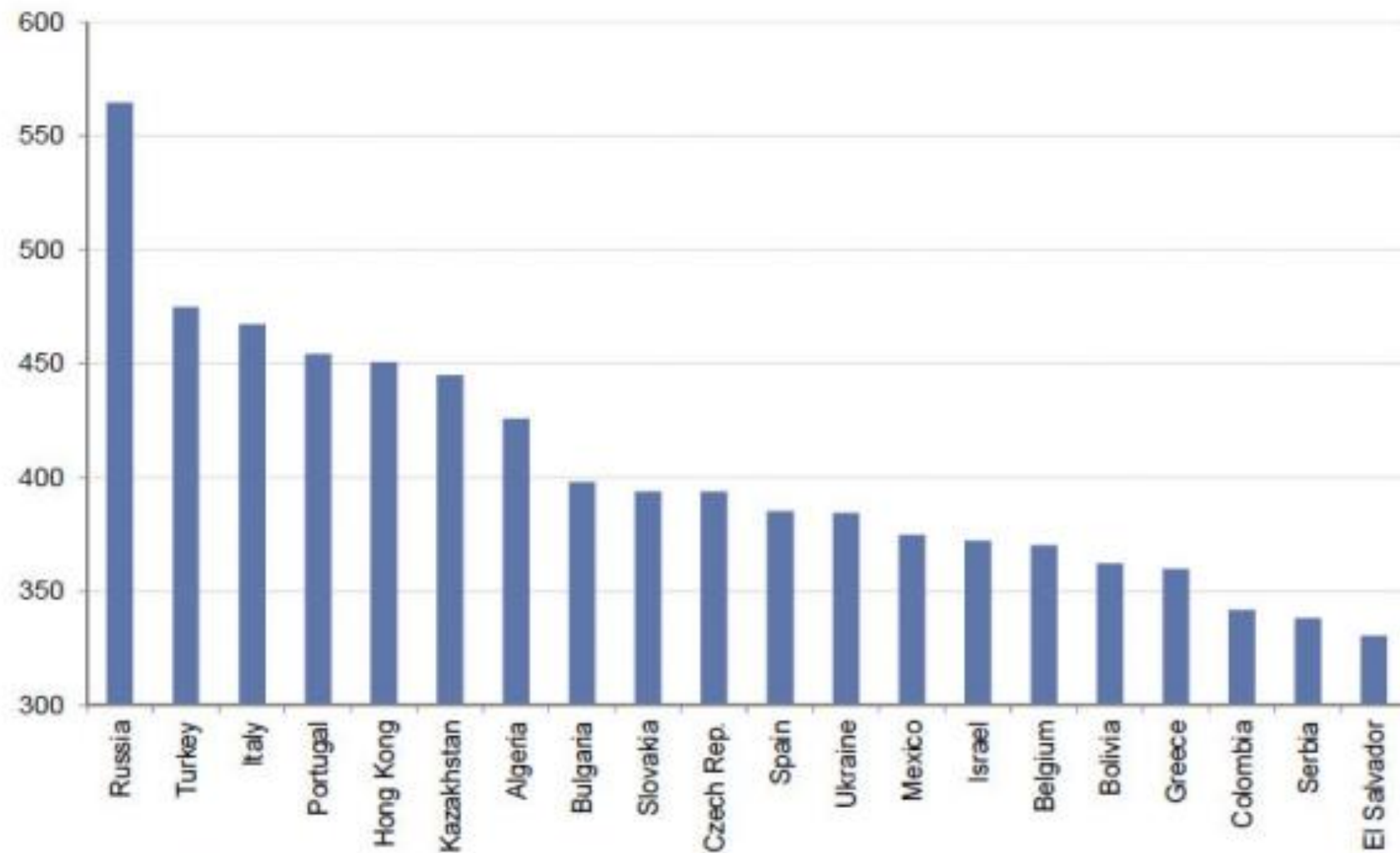
1.3

1.1

Sta

Where you get your collar felt

Most police per 100,000 persons, 2013



Source: UN, ONS.

Traditional Functions

Effective tax rates

On gross income of \$100,000, May 2011, %



Source: KPMG

Traditional Functions of States

Several functions that most modern states perform:

- Defense
- Policing
- Taxation
- Order, Administration, and “Legibility”
 - Mapping and Territory Management
 - Property Regulation
 - Censuses, Migration Control
 - Administration of State Resources
 - Catalog Beliefs and Values

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?

1. Political/Conflict Theories
2. Economic Theories
3. Cultural Theories
4. Diffusion Theories

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?

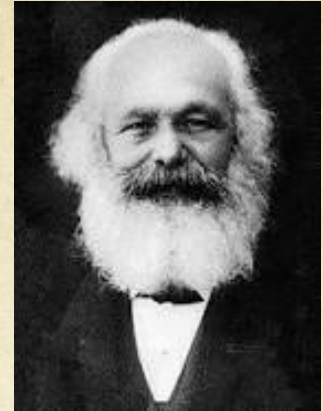
- Political/Conflict Theories
 - a.k.a. “bellicist” theory
- For states to emerge, several factors needed:
 - Centralized authority
 - Ability to tax population to raise revenue
 - Ability to mobilize population for collective projects
- Wars served all these purposes and led to rise of states.
How?
- Why did the modern state emerge in Europe?

War made the state, and the state made war

Charles Tilly

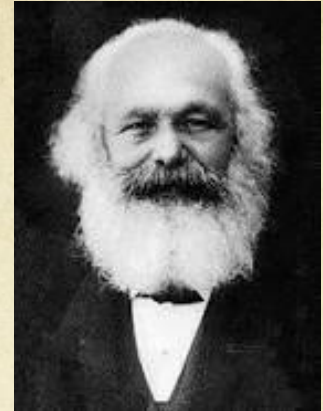


Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?



- Economic Theories
- States are a reflection of underlying economic interests
 - Capitalist classes may favor rise of states because stable state maximizes profit potential and preserves their dominance (allowing exploitation of labor, e.g.)
(Karl Marx)
 - Modern states emerged when important economic coalitions gave up their privileges in exchange for protection of their rights by the state (Douglass North, et al.)

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?



- Economic Theories
- The Modern State is useful to:
 - To secure investments
 - To provide social and physical infrastructures
 - To control and regulate conflicts between capitalists and other classes
 - To protect the interests of capitalists and other classes against competition from abroad.

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?



- Cultural Theories
- Ideas and cultural forces in peoples' lives led to favoring the state as an organization
 - *Theory*: emergence of nationalism led people to see the state as an expression of their nation and accept its legitimacy
 - *Theory*: religious changes with Protestantism reshaped attitudes toward role of institutions in daily life
 - Calvinism created “disciplined societies” of hard work, systemic relief for the poor, etc. (Philip Gorski)

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?

- **Diffusion Theories:** It was not foregone conclusion that everywhere would end up with states
- Question: Why did the state as a form of organization spread around the world?
 - *Theory:* states had military advantages over non-states and thus came to dominate (Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*)
 - Consider rival organizations
 - Survival of the fittest

Causes and Effects: Why Do States Emerge?

- **Diffusion Theories:** It was not foregone conclusion that everywhere would end up with states
- Question: Why did the state as a form of organization spread around the world?
 - *Theory:* state organization became an important, high status model that took root everywhere (i.e., perhaps even where not necessarily efficient). People willingly accept the norm of nation states because it is everywhere! (John Meyer et al.)
 - Thought Experiment – a newly discovered island society

What have the Romans....?

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc7HmhrGTuQ>

From Empires to Nation States

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6omQ5JjjLsE>

Nationalism and National Identity



Nationalism - Concepts

- Identity
 - *Social label that locates an individual or group in society*
- National identity
 - *An identity that locates one's social position in relation to national membership*
- Nationalism
 - *The view that the world is and should be divided into nations that are sovereign and egalitarian*

Approaches to National Identity: Why do we have nationalism?

○ Primordialism

- All societies have something like nationalism. Collective identity is necessary for societies to function.
- National identity is continuous with pre-historical (“primordial”) forms of identity
- Nations are “primordial units” to which people feel passionately loyal
- Two Types:
 - Sociobiology or Evolutionary Psychology view
 - National identity biologically rooted – helps us survive
 - Social or cultural imperative
 - We identify with larger group because we are social creatures.

Approaches to National Identity: Why do we have nationalism?

- Modernism
 - Nationalism emerged first in Europe in 17th and 18th centuries:
 - Corresponds to most of a society's population
 - Equality of members
 - Nation is Sovereign

Approaches to National Identity: Why do we have nationalism?

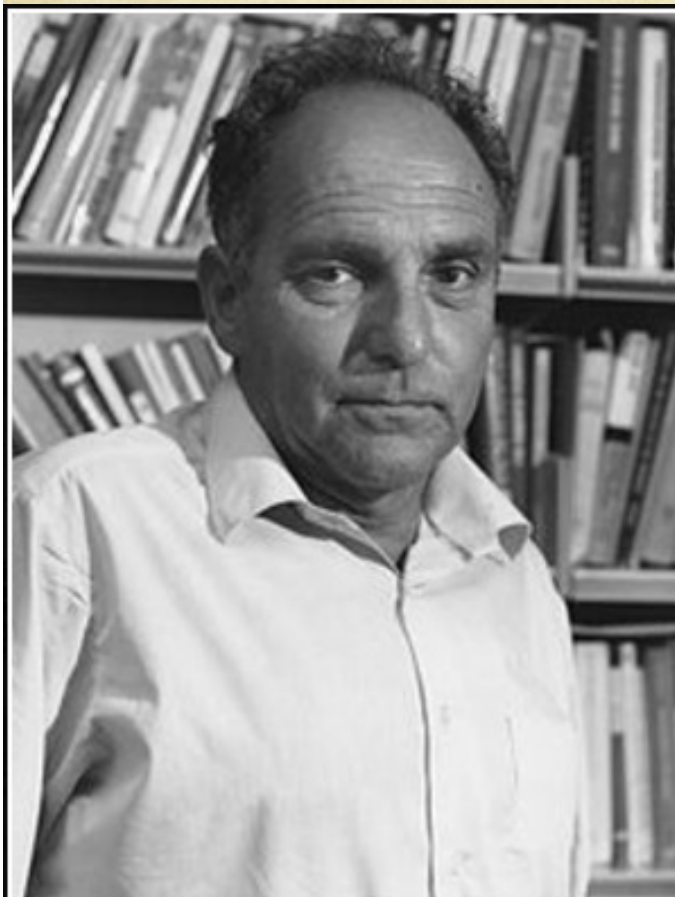
- Modernism

- Divide: **Structuralism vs. Constructivism**

- Structuralism: big, difficult to change parts of society (“social structures”) determine what matters about national identity
 - Constructivism: creative efforts of people define and redefine identities since nations are symbolic constructs

A Structuralist Example

- Ernest Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 1983
- Industrial capitalism produces nationalism through the instrument of the state.
- Capitalism requires:
 - Socially and geographically mobile workforce as well as standardized language.
- Nationalism encourages the social characteristics that capitalism requires: breaking down hierarchical ties and giving rise to the interchangeability of workers.



Nationalism is not the awakening of
nations to self-consciousness; it
invents nations where they do not
exist...

— Ernest Gellner —

AZ QUOTES

A Constructivist Example

- Liah Greenfeld, Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity, 1992.
- Nationalism is fundamentally cultural and needs to be understood as an imaginative response to social conditions.
- When hierarchical status of elites are challenged, they help create (construct) a new national identity that serves their interests.
- How do you think a national identity can be constructed?



Types of Nationalism

- Civic nationalism
 - Member of the nation if a citizen of its state
 - Once called “Western” nationalism
 - Ex.: France, United Kingdom, United States
 - Also similar: “territorial nationalism”
 - based on place of birth or residence
- Ethnic nationalism
 - Membership in the nation based on ancestry
 - Once called “Eastern” nationalism
 - Ex.: Germany, Russia

Individualistic vs. Collectivistic by Greenfeld

- Individualistic nationalism
 - Voluntary membership
 - Always civic (not ethnic)
 - Ex.: United Kingdom, United States
- Collectivistic nationalism
 - Transcends will of agency or individuals
 - Can be civic
 - Ex.: France
 - Can be ethnic
 - Ex.: Germany, Japan, Russia

Ethnic Conflict

- Yugoslavia Wars (1990s)
- Rwanda (1995)
- Darfur – non-Arabs (2003-now)
- Myanmar - Rohingya Muslims (ongoing)
- Conflict in Niger Delta (1990s – now)
- Turkey – Kurds (1980s – now)
- Iraq - Genocide of Yazidis by ISIL in 2014

Causes and Effects: Why Ethno-National Conflict?

1. Primordial Bonds
2. Material Interests
3. Rational Calculation
4. Social Psychology

Causes and Effects: Why Ethno-National Conflict?

Primordial Bonds

- *Theory:* Groups that feel their identity is under threat are likely sources of conflict
- People's passions and loyalties cause the conflict.
- Questions from this perspective remain:
 - If bonds are primordial, why is conflict not permanent and constant?
 - What explains why conflict emerges when and where it does?

Causes and Effects: Why Ethno-National Conflict?

Material Interests

- *Theory*: Ethno-national identity is used as an instrument for other purposes
 - Gaining power
 - Accessing resources
- Instrumentalism
 - *explains outcomes by showing how its development or persistence is in the (usually material) interest of powerful individuals or group*

Causes and Effects: Why Ethno-National Conflict?

Rational Calculation

- *Theory*: Rational choices of actors explain presence or absence of conflict
- Similar to some instrumentalist approaches
- Affiliation with minority group has different costs and benefits in different circumstances
- Does assimilation to the majority make sense? David Laitin looks at three determining factors: economic benefits, in-group status, out-group status.

Factors influencing Ethno-National Identity

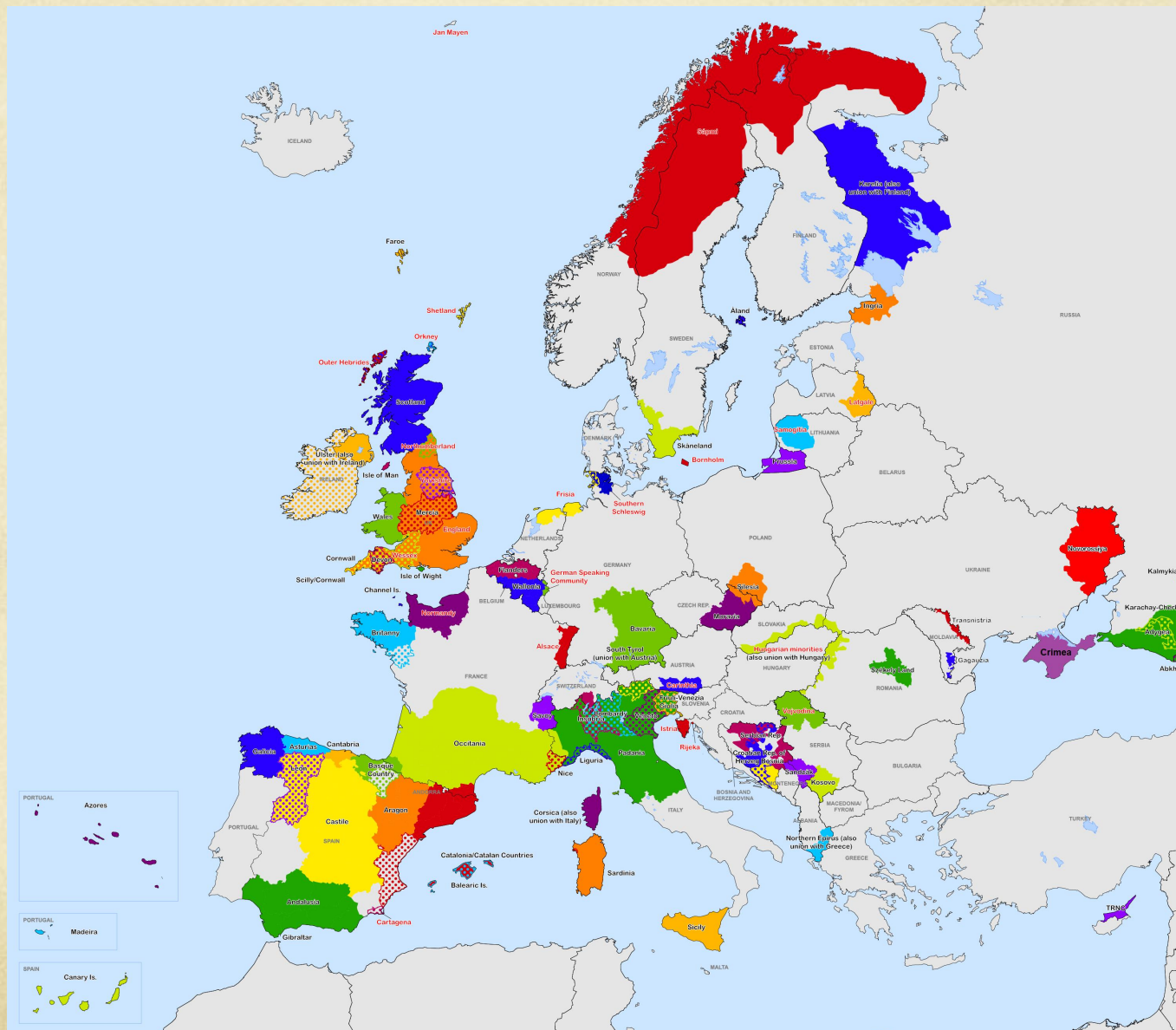
	Adopt the Majority Ethno-National Identity	Reject the Majority Ethno-National Identity
Few seek assimilation	Potential rewards if successful, but high risk is present, as potential costs include both in-group and out-group sanctioning	No majority-group membership gains, but risks of in-group and out-group sanctioning minimized
Many seek assimilation	Likelihood of group sanctioning goes down. Rewards are still present but with fewer potential costs.	No majority-group membership gains and still no risk of in-group and out-group sanctioning.

Causes and Effects: Why Ethno-National Conflict?

Social Psychology

- *Theory*: collectively held group feelings and resentments lead to conflict
- Focuses on two things:
 - Creation of boundaries: Us vs. Them mentality
 - Relative social status of “us” and “them”
- Relates to Primordialist, Cultural Boundaries, and Material Interests theories
- Example Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 1985

Secessionist Movements



Secession in the world

- Secessionist movements are the most frequent source of violent conflict in the international system today. Examples?
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfL2S-4uilE>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaQ4_v0fz6k&t=107s
- Between 1956-2002, 146 ethnic groups in 78 countries demanded greater territorial autonomy or independence from their central government.

Secession in the world

- Secession is withdrawal of people and territory from an existing state to form a sovereign political unit.
 - Internal and external sovereignty
- Which communities get politicized?
 - Cultural markers and territorial concentration
- What kinds of tactics can be used?
 - Ballots vs. bullets
- Rare in the developed West! (Norway from Sweden) Why?

Secession in the world

- Core problem of mobilizing support for secession and persuading the individuals that the costs are bearable.
- Enabling factors:
 - Institutional capacity to foster/maintain identity and mobilize
- Constraining factors:
 - Transition costs controlled by the central government
 - Economic viability after independence
- Secessionist support among the group:
 - Cost-sensitivity? Hard liners vs. moderates sensitive to costs

Secession and economic globalization (Jason Sorens, 2004)

- How does economic globalization affect secession? Is it an enabling or a restraining factor?
- Free trade makes secession less inefficient and exit threats more credible.
- Statistical analysis: 15 regions, between 1980-2000.
Scotland, Wales, Quebec, Euskadi (Basque Country), Navarre, Catalonia, Balearic Isles, Liguria, Piedmont, Lombardy, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Faroe Islands, Puerto Rico, and Flanders
- Dependent Variable: secessionist vote share
Independent Variables: economic conditions, prosperity, globalization, recent changes in political autonomy

Secession and economic globalization

Results:

- Globalization is positively associated with secessionist vote growth.
- Higher regional GDP is associated with higher secessionist vote share.
- Regions with higher secessionist vote share receive more autonomy. BUT we generally see symmetrical decentralization.

Government response to secession (Barbara Walter 2006)

- Why do governments fight some separatists but not others?
- 2 existing explanations:
 1. **The value of the stakes:** Governments are more likely to fight for territory that is economically, strategically, psychologically valuable.
 2. **Relative capabilities:** Governments are more likely to fight if the risks and costs of confronting a particular opponent are low.

Government response to secession

- Walter says **reputation** is also important: Governments consider the effects of their actions concerning future challenges and future losses and their reputation!
- 2 factors:
 1. The number of challengers
 2. Cumulative value of all the land within its borders that could come under dispute
- Statistical analysis: Self-determination movements initiated between 1956 and 2002.

Government response to secession

Results:

- The greater the number of ethnic groups in a country and the greater the strategic value of combined future lands, the less likely a government is to accommodate the challenge.
- Democracy matters. More democratic countries are more likely to accommodate such demands.
- Concentration of the ethnic group matters. Countries with concentrated ethnic groups are less likely to accommodate.

The moral question

- When should secession be considered legitimate?
- Contradictory principles of international law:
Territorial integrity vs. national self-determination

2 types of theories on morality of secession:

1. Remedial Right Only Theories
2. Primary Right Theories
 - a. Ascriptive Group Theories
 - b. Associative Group Theories

The moral question

1. Remedial Right Only Theories (RROT):

A group has a right to secede *if and only* if it has suffered certain injustices. Secession is the remedy of last resort.

- The physical survival of its members is threatened by the actions of the state OR it suffers violations of other basic human rights (Kurds in Iraq? Kosovo from Serbia?)
- Its previously sovereign territory was unjustly taken by the state (Baltic Republics?)

The moral question

2. Primary Right Theories (PRT):

Certain groups have a right to secede in the absence of any injustice.

Being a nation, having a common culture, history, language, a sense of its own distinctiveness, shared aspiration for constituting its own political unit could be enough.

Then, this is a right to secede even from a perfectly just state which effectively and flawlessly performs all its legitimizing functions.

Discussion Questions

- Imagine life in the absence of a modern state. What would life be like?
- How do you think the UK was established? Which theory is more plausible? War, capitalism, culture, etc.
- Talk about identities. What is your dominant identity? When do you feel more Welsh, more English, more Scottish, and more British, more European?
- Can ethnically heterogeneous states exist in the long run?
- When is it just to secede? What promoted the ruling Catalan party to hold a referendum and declare independence? Why did the Spanish government react the way it did? Why is the European Union mostly silent on this issue?

Next Week

- Democracy (Chapter 6)
- Authoritarian Regimes (Chapter 7)

