

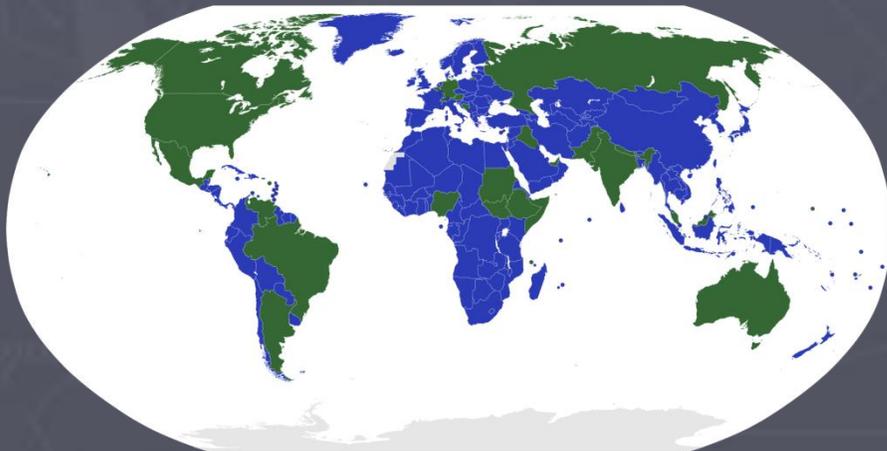
Creating the US Constitution

The Articles of Confederation and the debate over Federalism

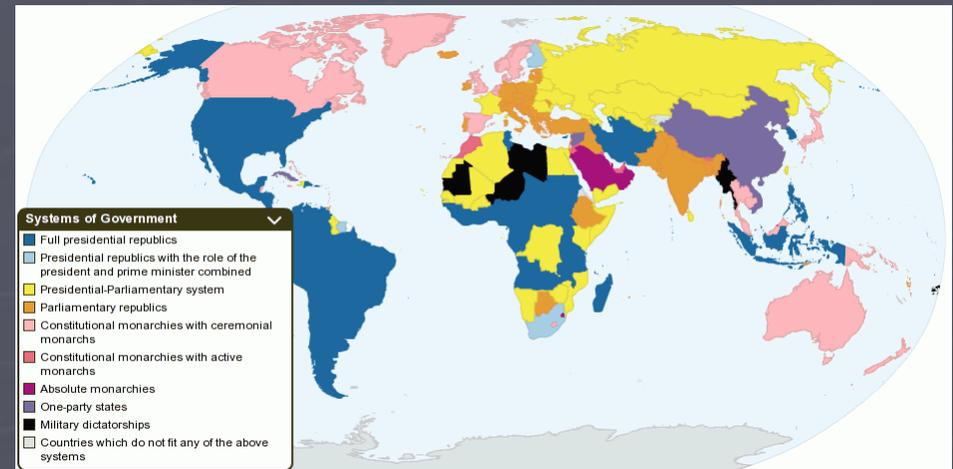


Key Vocabulary

- Confederation – Political system where states retain ultimate authority, except for power expressly delegated to central government.
- Federation – Collection of smaller political entities, unified by one single central government.
- Constitution – Limitation on the powers of the government by establishing powers and restrictions on governmental powers

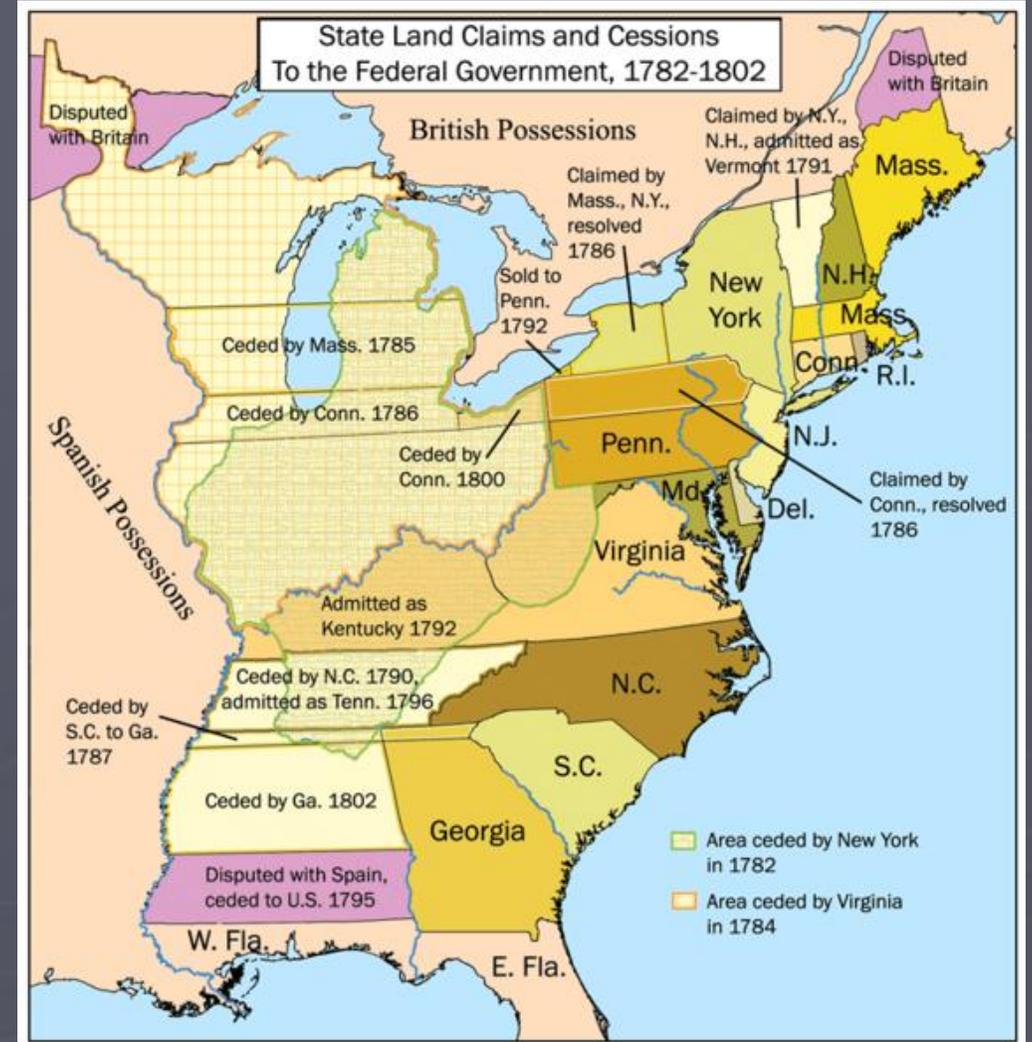


Federalist States
(Green)
Unitary States
(Blue)



Historical Context: The Articles of Confederation

- First Government established during the American War of Independence
 - Submitted 1777, ratified 1781
 - Created loose Confederation of states with strong state governments, and weak national government



Constitutional Convention of 1787

- Constitutional Convention called in 1787 to fix problems of Articles of Confederation
 - Virginia Plan – Three Branches with a powerful president, congressional power proportional to state population
 - New Jersey Plan – Favored a stronger congress, where congressional power equally divided among states



Debating Federalism Activity



Debating Federalism: Anti-Federalists and Federalists

Anti-Federalists

- Did not want the new constitution to be ratified
 - It gave too much power to the national government
 - Allowed for a standing army in peace time
 - No Bill of rights to protect rights of the people
 - Executive Branch had too much power
 - 'Necessary and proper' clause – too vague and allowed potential for tyranny

Federalists

- Defended the new constitution
 - Needed a strong central government
 - The separation of powers into three independent branches protected the rights of the people.
 - No one branch could be too powerful
 - Argued not all rights could possibly be listed so do not restrict them by attempting to do so

Significance

- US Constitution ratified September 17, 1789
 - Great Compromise – Virginia Plan (House of Representatives) and New Jersey Plan (Senate) adopted
 - 3/5 Compromise – Decision on how to count slaves in southern states.
- Federalist and Anti-Federalists form basis of modern two party system in United States
 - Democratic Party – In favor of more central government control with more services provided for people
 - Republican Party – Wants to limit control by central government by reserving decisions to state governments and private companies