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**Approaches to the Study of Political Geography:**

There are six approaches that employed by political geography.

**.1. The Power Analysis Approach**

 It is commonly used by non-geographers. Some of who like to define geography as one of the several power resources of in relations. One such study, for example divides national power in to five components: geographic, economic, political, sociological and military. The geographic element include location, size and shape of the area, the degree to which land is arable or barren, the effect of climate, and the reservoir of natural resources with which the land is endowed. This is, however, represents a limited geographical approach, for geographers do not isolate geography as determinant of national power. A fully geographic approach would make an inventory of pertinent categories and relates this inventory to politically significant phenomena.

The categories include: I. The physical environment (landforms, climate, soils, vegetation, water bodies etc). II. Movement (the directional flow of transportation and communication of goods, men and ideas). III. Raw materials, semi-finished and finished goods (employed and potential, in both time and space terms) IV. Population (in its various characteristics, particularly qualitative and ideological) V. The body politic (its various administrative forms, ideals, and goods in their areal expression, as a country, national and international block frameworks). All of these five categories are all viewed from within spatial framework, geographers also work space as six and direct category. In these sense the location, shape and boundaries of political entities analyzed, as well as the impact of space up on the internal character and external relations of such political entities.

.**2. The Historical Approach**

 Is generally, adopted in studies, which describes the evolution of a political or social unit through time. Historical political geography has its focus on the past, both for the sake of understanding the past better and for analyzing current problems. “People will not look forward to posterity who never looks back ward to their ancestors” E. Burke. While much that now exist can only be understood in terms of what existed in the past, most studies in historical political geography have their greatest value in explaining the past. To rely upon them as guides to projecting political roles and activities of states today can prove fruitless and even misleading

**.3. The Morphological Approach**

It is the study of form and structure. It calls for a descriptive and interpretive analysis of the external and internal structure of the state area as a geographic object. The external morphological attributes include size, shape, location and boundaries, whereas the internal morphological subdivisions include core areas, the capital, and the cultural regions. It studies political areas according to their form that are their patterns and structural features. Patterns refer to the arrangement formed by the association of political units, whether national states, regional blocks, global alliances, or international administrative divisions, as expressed by location, size and shape. Structure on the other hand refers to the spatial features that political units have in common i.e. population and economic cores, capitals, boundaries, and underdeveloped or otherwise problem units.

**4. The Functional Approach**

 It is concerned with the functioning of an area as a political unit. Every political unit has subordinate areas of organization, each with its own governmental functions. These subordinate areas must have stronger political associations with the state than with one another or with outside state. For the state to function properly it must have unity, homogeneity, coherence and viability basic requirements for such unity. Viability of the state is related, not only domestic economic relations, but also economic, strategic and political relations with other states. Thus, the functional approach would study state strengthening or centralizing forces and state strengthening forces as they are related to space. Example, with in USA, one of the function of the state is to keep freedom of passage across interstate lines. Another example of the functional approach can be drawn from a state’s external economic relations. The function of the state is to create or to maintain economic viability for its citizens. Law on foreign trade, including subsides, tariff, and embargos are tools used by the state to promote this particular function.

.**5. The Behavioral Approach**

 Behavior refers to the sequence of interrelated biological and mental operations by which organisms respond to stimuli. The perception and attitudes toward foreign countries among political decision-makers may well affect foreign policy.

1. Individual behavior- one man’s behavior

2. Aggregate behavior- includes such types as mass-group, institutional, and international behavior.

3. Spatial behavior- indicates where the various attributes of space center in to behavioralas a salient and independent variable. The perception of and attitude towards foreign countries among political decision-makers may well affect foreign policy.

4. Territorial behavior- the propensity to possess, occupy, and defend a particular portion of area refers to the spatial patterns of behavior, in which each occurrences can be located by geographical coordinates and the resulting pattern can be analyzed.

**6. The Systematic Approach** It is derived from general system theory. The essence of general system theory is that it focus on systems of interrelated objects (person or thing), which enter the system of framework as an inputs, exit as outputs, and interact within it as elements that feed or flow internally. The emphasis is on the unity or the wholeness of the framework. Systems, in to which new elements enter and from which elements leave, are open systems, in contrast to the closed ones which function through the internal generating of energy. The geopolitical system is advanced as a unit within which the political process interacts with geographical space. Political transactions, structures and societal forces are the component of the process; place, area and landscape are the components of geographical space. Process and space interact through the nation of political action areas, and various ideological attachments, organization and perceptions, practices these action areas.