**Unit 4- Political Geography**

**Key Terms**

State Territory

Territoriality Sovereignty

Territorial Integrity Nation

Nation-State Multinational State

Multi-state Nation Stateless Nation

Centripetal Centrifugal

Devolution Reapportionment

Gerrymandering Heartland Theory

Unilateralism Supranational Organization

Deterritorialization Reterritorialization

**Key Concepts**

Shapes of States- Compact, Perforated, Fragmented, Prorupted, Elongated

Parts of States- Frontier, Buffer State, Exclave, Enclave

Types of Boundaries- Physical, Antecedent, Subsequent, Geometric, Superimposed, Relic

State, City-State, Nation-State, Stateless Nation, Multinational State, Multiethnic State, Multi-State Nation

Colony, Protectorate, Satellite State, Sphere of Influence

Sovereignty, Irredentism, Annexation, Balkanization, Hegemony, Colonialism/Imperialism

Organic Theory, Heartland Theory, Rimland Theory, Domino Theory

Supranational Organizations

UNCLOS Law of the Sea

Ethnic Cleansing

Gerrymandering

Federal v Unitary System, Devolution

Democratic v Autocratic Governments

Centripetal forces, Centrifugal forces

**Key Content**

A **state** is an area organized into a political unit and ruled by an established government that has control over its internal and foreign affairs. It occupies a defined territory on Earth’s surface and contains a permanent population. *Country* is synonymous with *state*. Nearly all inhabitable land is organized into states.

**Microstates** are states with very small land area. The Vatican is the world’s smallest microstate, coming in at 0.17 square miles. Many microstates are islands, explaining both their small size and sovereignty.

A state has **sovereignty** when it has independence from control of its internal affairs by other states.

A **nation-state** is a state whose territory corresponds to that occupied by a particular ethnicity. To preserve and promote distinctive cultural traits, ethnicities seek to govern themselves without interference.

The first states were territories surrounding cities. A **city-state** is a sovereign state that comprises a town and the surrounding countryside. Walls clearly delineated the boundaries of the city. The city controlled the agricultural land surrounding the city that produced food for the urban residents.

**Medieval States** The largest unified political territory of the preindustrial times was the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire controlled most of Europe, North Africa, and Southwest Asia. The empire comprised 38 provinces, each using the same set of laws that had been created in Rome. The Roman Empire eventually collapsed in the fifth century. The European portion of the empire was fragmented into a large number of estates owned by competing kings, dukes, barons, and other nobles. Victorious nobles seized control of defeated rivals’ estates. A handful of powerful kings emerged as rulers over a large number of these European estates beginning about the year 1100. The consolidation of neighboring estates under the unified control of a king formed the basis for the development of states.

**Self-determination** is the concept that ethnicities have the right to govern themselves. There is no perfect nation-state, as territory inhabited by a specific ethnicity never directly reflects the boundaries of countries. However, some states, such as Japan, are excellent examples of a nation-state. The ethnic make-up of Japan is 98.5 percent Japanese, 0.5 percent Korean, 0.4 percent Chinese, and 0.6 percent other.

A **multiethnic state** is a state that contains more than one ethnicity. Every nation is multiethnic to some degree, as no state’s population encompasses 100 percent of a single ethnicity.

A **multinational state** is a state that contains more than one ethnicity with traditions of self-determination and self-governance.

A **colony** is a territory that is legally tied to a sovereign state rather than being completely independent. In some instances, a sovereign state manages the colony’s military and foreign affairs. In others, it also manages the colony’s internal affairs.

**Distribution of Colonies** The United Nations has classified 17 places in the world as “non-self-governing territories.” Western Sahara, French Polynesia, and New Caledonia are all examples of this type of territory. The U.N. does not include territories that are uninhabited, or those that they consider to have considerable autonomy in self-governing. Puerto Rico, Greenland, and Hong Kong and Macao are all examples of territories with significant levels of self-governance.

A **boundary** is an invisible line that marks the extent of a state’s territory. Boundaries completely surround an individual state to mark the outer limits of its territorial control and to give it a distinctive shape.

Historically, frontiers rather than boundaries separated states. A **frontier** is a zone where no state exercises complete political control. Frontiers between states have been replaced by boundaries. Boundaries may be classified into three categories:

* Cultural boundaries follow the distribution of cultural features.
* Geometric boundaries are based on human constructs, such as straight lines.
* Physical boundaries coincide with significant features of the natural landscape.

**The Law of the Sea** The Law of the Sea identifies three types of water boundaries:

* Territorial waters. Up to 12 nautical miles from shore, a state may set laws regulating passage by ships registered in other states.
* Contiguous zone. Between 12 and 24 nautical miles from shore, a state may enforce laws concerning pollution, taxation, customs, and immigration.
* Exclusive economic zone. Between 24 and 200 nautical miles, a state has the sole right to the fish and other marine life.

**Shape of States**

**Compact States: Efficient-** In a **compact state**, the distance from the center to any boundary does not vary significantly. The ideal theoretical compact state would be shaped like a circle, with the capital at the center and with the shortest possible boundary to defend. A compact state has efficient communication and transportation.

**Elongated States: Potential Isolation-** An **elongated** **state** has a long and narrow shape. Elongated states may suffer from poor internal communications. A region located at an extreme end of the elongation might be isolated from the capital, which is usually placed near the center.

**Prorupted States: Access or Disruption-** An otherwise compact state with a large projecting extension is a **prorupted state**. Proruptions can provide a state with access to a resource, such as water. Proruptions are also used to separate two states that would otherwise share a boundary.

**Perforated States: South Africa** A state that completely surrounds another one is a **perforated state**. In this situation, the state that is surrounded may face problems of dependence on, or interference from, the surrounding state. South Africa completely surrounds the state of Lesotho.

**Fragmented States: Problematic** A **fragmented state** includes several discontinuous pieces of territory. Fragmented states separated by water can face problems and costs associated with communications and maintaining national unity. Fragmented states separated by an intervening state sometimes have problems dealing with the states in between the fragments.

**Landlocked States Landlocked states** have difficulty engaging in international trade because they lack direct access to the ocean. A landlocked state is completely surrounded by other countries. Landlocked states are most common in Africa, where 14 of the continent’s 54 states have no direct access to the ocean. The prevalence of landlocked states in Africa is a remnant of the colonial era. Landlocked states must cooperate with neighboring states that have seaports.

**Governing States** A state has two types of government: a national government and local governments. At the national scale, a government can be more or less democratic. At the local scale, the national government can determine how much power to allocate to local governments.

**Regime Types**

A **democracy** is a country in which citizens elect leaders and can run for office.

An **autocracy** is a country that is run according to the interests of the ruler rather than the people.

An **anocracy** is a country that is not fully democratic or fully autocratic, but rather displays a mix of the two types. Democracies and autocracies differ in three essential elements: selection of leaders, citizen participation, and checks and balances. The Arab Spring shows how the world is becoming more democratic.

A **unitary state** places most power in the hands of central government officials while a **federal state** allocates strong power to units of local government within the country.

The process of redrawing legislative boundaries for the purpose of benefiting the party in power is called **gerrymandering**. The boundaries separating the 435 legislative districts within the United States are redrawn periodically to ensure that each district has approximately the same population. Boundaries must be redrawn because migration inevitably results in some districts gaining population and losing population. The political party in control of the state legislature naturally attempts to redraw boundaries to improve the chances of its supporters to win seats. The state judged to have the most gerrymandering is North Carolina.

**The United Nations** is the most important global organization. The United Nations has provided a forum for the discussion of international problems. On occasion, the U.N. has intervened in conflicts between or within member states, authorizing military and peacekeeping actions. The U.N. seeks to promote international cooperation to address global economic problems, promote human rights, and provide humanitarian relief.

**September 11, 2001, Attacks** The United States has experienced a number of terrorist attacks since the late 1980s, but the attacks of September 11, 2001, caused dramatic concern. The twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City were the two tallest buildings in the United States before they were destroyed in the attacks. The Pentagon was also damaged. The attacks resulted in nearly 3,000 fatalities.

**Terrorist Organizations** Some terrorist attacks are the work of one or two individuals who are not formally associated with terrorist organizations. However, most recent attacks have been carried out by members belonging to terrorist organizations. Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and Boko Haram are three prominent terrorist organizations from recent years.

**State Support for Terrorism** In recent years in Southwest Asia, several states have provided support for terrorism. Support may include providing sanctuary for terrorists wanted by other countries, supplying weapons, money, and intelligence to terrorists, and planning attacks using terrorists. Afghanistan and Pakistan have provided sanctuary for al-Qaeda terrorists. Iraq and Iran are both alleged to have provided material and financial support for terrorists. Controversy surrounds the degree of their involvement in terrorism.

**State Terrorist Attacks: Libya** The government of Libya, including its longtime leader, Muammar el-Qaddafi, was accused of sponsoring a 1986 bombing of a nightclub in Berlin, Germany, that was popular with U.S. military personnel then stationed there. Libyan agents were found to have planted bombs on Pam Am Flight 103 that killed 270 people over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, as well as 170 people on UTA Flight 772 over Niger in 1989. Qaddafi was overthrown by Libyan protestors in 2011 as a part of the Arab Spring. Qaddafi also was captured and killed following his overthrow.