UNIT 4

Political Patterns and Processes

Chapter 8 *Political Processes and Power*

Chapter 9 *Political Boundaries and Forms of Governance*

Chapter 10 *Challenges in the Modern State*

Unit Overview

Today's political map consists mostly of independent states in which all territory is connected, and most people share a language and other cultural traits. This was not true in the past. Many states were sprawling, diverse empires, such as the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East or the British Empire that included people of many cultures. At the same time, many cultural groups were divided into several states, such as the hundreds of small German states in central Europe or the various groups of nomads in central Asia.

Political Power Over a Territory

A government demonstrates its power over a geographic area by enforcing laws that govern individual behavior and affect how resources are used. Boundaries separate territories at various scales, from those that divide the world into countries to those that determine where students attend school.

Political power can be divided in several ways. In a country, it can be centralized in one national government or divided between the national government and local governments. In the United States, local power can be centralized under regional or county governments or divided into a patchwork of cities, school districts, and other types of districts.

Challenges for States

Independent states face challenges from globalization. Transnational corporations, international organizations, and global environmental problems make the boundaries around a state less important than in the past. States also face challenges from within. Regions with distinctive cultural groups, such as Quebec and Nunavut in Canada, have successfully argued for more autonomy.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

1. The political organization of space results from historical and current processes, events, and ideas. (PSO-4)

2. Political boundaries and divisions of governance, between states and within them, reflect balances of power that have been negotiated or imposed. (IMP-4)

3. Political, economic, cultural, or technological changes can challenge state sovereignty. (SPS-4)

Source: *AP® Human Geography Course and Exam Description.* Effective Fall 2020. (College Board).

CHAPTER 8

Political Processes and Power

Topics 4.1–4.3

Topic 4.1 Introduction to Political Geography

Learning Objective: For world political maps:

a. Define the different types of political entities.

b. Identify a contemporary example of political entities. (PSO-4.A)

Topic 4.2 Political Processes

Learning Objective: Explain the processes that have shaped contemporary political geography. (PSO-4.B)

Topic 4.3 Political Power and Territoriality

Learning Objective: Describe the concepts of political power and territoriality as used by geographers. (PSO-4.C)

[Soviet] General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

—President Ronald Reagan, speech, 1987

Source: David Palmer

The Berlin Wall has mostly been torn down after the unification of East and West Germany in 1989. Parts of the wall have been preserved to express messages of unification and remembrance. (See Topic 4.2 for how political processes shape boundaries.)

Introduction to Political Geography

Essential Question: What are the different types of political entities, with current examples, on a world map?

Empires and kingdoms were common in most of the world for the past 2,000 years. However, global forces, wars, and changing ideas about political power, economics, and self-rule have reshaped the world map over the last few centuries.

The Structure of the Contemporary Political Map

People often use the words *country, state,* and *nation* to mean the same thing. But they have different meanings. *Country* is the most general term. It is often used to describe any political entity that is independent from the control of any other entity. *State* and *nation* have more precise meanings.

Independent States as Building Blocks

Political units exist at various scales. In the United States, for example, a person resides in several political units at once: maybe a town or city, a county, a state, and finally, in the country as a whole. The term *state* can be confusing because it can be used in two different ways. In this example, it refers to one of the 50 states that make up the United States. But in international relations, a **state** is the largest political unit, the formal term for a country. To be defined as a state, several criteria must be met:

- has a defined boundary
- contains a permanent population
- maintains sovereignty (defined below) over its domestic and international affairs
- is recognized by other states

The United States recognizes 195 states based on these criteria, but the number can vary depending on which government or international organization makes the list. These four requirements are easily defined, but in the geopolitical arena, they can be difficult to recognize.

Understanding Sovereignty The power of a political unit, or government, to rule over its own affairs is known as **sovereignty.** It is a key principle in understanding how governments function. In order for a political unit to have legitimacy over its domestic and international affairs, it must maintain sovereignty over its own land. In the modern world, a territory must have

defined borders that have been legally established. No political unit can exist or claim sovereignty without a permanent population within its borders. In most cases, the people of a state have lived in a territory for generations, if not centuries. However, most states are multinational, or made up of several ethnicities and nationalities.

The Example of China Consider the complicated relationship between the People's Republic of China and the nearby island of Taiwan (the Republic of China). In 1949, China ended a long civil war. The victorious communist forces led by Mao Zedong established their capital in Beijing. More than 2 million supporters of the losing side, known as nationalists, retreated to Taiwan. China was divided between two governments, one on the mainland and one in Taiwan, and each considered itself China's legitimate ruler. The government on the mainland never gave up its claim on Taiwan, and Taiwan never declared independence.

Today, the government in Beijing rules more than 1.4 billion residents. Taiwan rules about 24 million, but it manages its own affairs and has diplomatic relations with about 20 countries.

China's claim that Taiwan is nothing more than a renegade province is a direct challenge to Taiwan's sovereignty. And since Taiwan is recognized by so few other states, it seems to be an effective challenge. Largely because of China's opposition, Taiwan is not a member of the United Nations (UN), and the case can be made that Taiwan does not fully meet the third and fourth criteria to be recognized as a state listed on the previous page.

Types of Political Entities

Often the term *nation* is interchangeably used with *country*; however, the terms are not identical. In general, a **nation** is a group of people who have certain things in common:
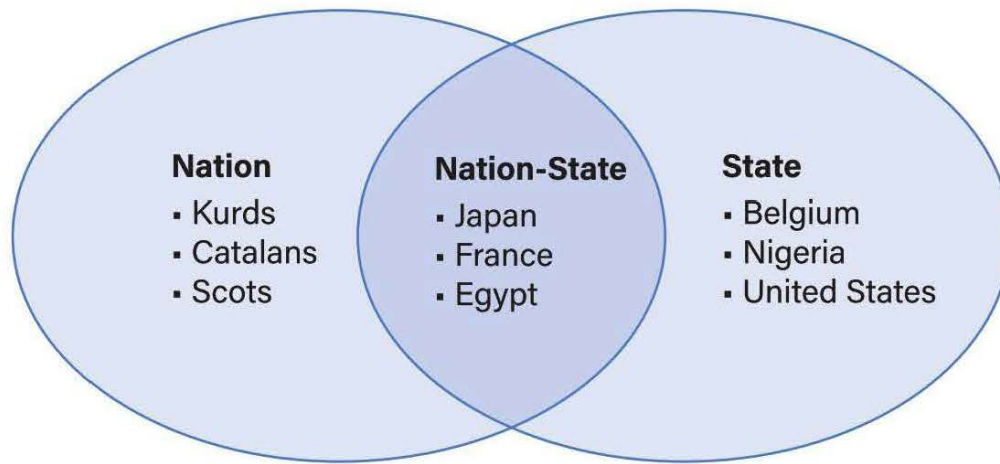
- a common cultural heritage
- a set of beliefs and values that unify them
- a traditional claim to a particular space as their homeland
- a desire to establish their own state or express self-rule in another way

Depending on how tightly one applies these standards, the number of nations ranges from a few hundred to several thousand. Many political entities combine aspects of nationhood and statehood.

Nation-States A nation of people who fulfill the qualifications of a state form a **nation-state**. Among the best examples of nation-states are Iceland and Japan. Icelanders make up 94 percent of its total population of 360,000. Scandinavian settlers founded Iceland on an island that had no indigenous population. Japanese account for 99 percent of the total population of its 128 million permanent residents. A strong national identity coupled with strict immigration policies have maintained Japan as a nation-state.

DISTINGUISHING NATIONS AND STATES

Nation
- Kurds
- Catalans
- Scots

Nation-State
- Japan
- France
- Egypt

State
- Belgium
- Nigeria
- United States

Multinational States A **multinational state** is a country that contains more than one nation. Most countries in the world today are multinational states that consist of one dominant nation and other smaller ones. The dominant nation controls most of the political power, but the smaller ones can have a significant impact.

Numerous multinational states fit these criteria, including Canada. While the English-language culture dominates, about 25 percent of Canadians speak French primarily. Most live in the province of Quebec. In an effort to prevent Quebec from demanding independence, the national government passed legislation making Canada a bilingual state and gave the province increased local autonomy in government and education.

Similarly, the Canadian government granted more autonomy over local affairs and natural resources to the indigenous nations. As part of this effort, it created the territory of Nunavut in 1999. Nunavut is in the far north of Canada. Over 80 percent of the population consider themselves Inuit, a culturally similar group of indigenous people in the Arctic. South of this region, Canada has designated over 600 indigenous governments and tribes as First Nations. This label has granted these people legal status as designated groups, providing them with certain legal rights and privileges. These privileges usually include hunting and fishing rights, as well as more control over local affairs.

Autonomous Regions A defined area within a state that has a high degree of self-government and freedom from its parent state is sometimes known as an **autonomous region**. States often grant this authority to geographically, ethnically, or culturally distinct areas.

For example, Åland is a group of islands in the Baltic Sea. It is part of Finland but lies near Sweden. Most residents are ethnically Swedish and speak that language. The people of Åland submitted a request to the League of Nations, a body similar to today's United Nations, to join Sweden after World War I ended in 1918. The League ruled that Åland should remain part of Finland, but as a nonmilitarized, largely self-governing entity, which it still is today.

Semiautonomous Regions A state that has a degree of, but not complete self-rule, is a **semiautonomous region**. Straddling the Four Corners region of the United States (where the borders of Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico meet) is one of the largest American Indian nations, the Navajo. With more than 300,000 tribal members, they claim exclusive rights to over 27,000 square miles for their reservation, which is a federally recognized territory for Native Americans. Reservations, like the one controlled by the Navajo, possess tribal sovereignty, providing them exclusive rights, such as local self-government, and exemption from some state and federal taxes. However, the United States does not recognize complete sovereignty or independence of the Navajo or other Native American reservations.

Stateless Nations The Navajo are an example of a **stateless nation**, a cultural group that has no independent political entity. Since the world includes more nations than states, many stateless nations exist. Two that have sought to become independent states in recent decades are the Palestinians who live primarily in the Israeli-controlled territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the Basques who live near the Spanish-French border.

The largest stateless nation belongs to the Kurdish people. Spread among six states in southwest Asia—Turkey, Armenia, Iraq, Iran, Azerbaijan, and Syria—the Kurds number between 25 million and 30 million people in an area called Kurdistan. As states such as Syria and Iraq became destabilized in the 2000s, ethnic Kurds intensified their push for their own independent country.

THE KURDISTAN REGION

In which countries do the Kurds currently live? Since the Kurds live in numerous countries, what challenges might this create for Kurdish independence?

Multistate Nations A **multistate nation** occurs when a nation has a state of its own but stretches across borders of other states. For example, most Hungarians live in Hungary, but many live in the Transylvania region of Romania. The Korean nation is divided primarily between two states—the Democratic People's Republic of Korea—North Korea—and the Republic of Korea—South Korea—but with large numbers in China and the United States.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the different types of political entities, with current examples, on a world map?*

Political Entity	Description of Entity

KEY TERMS

state	autonomous region
sovereignty	semiautonomous region
nation	stateless nation
nation-state	multistate nation
multinational state	

Political Processes

Essential Question: What are the processes that have shaped contemporary political geography?

How many states are there in the world? While there are criteria for defining and describing the different types of states (see Topic 4.1), there is no unifying consensus as to how many countries actually exist. The United Nations officially recognizes 195 member states and has also granted permanent non-member observer status to non-states, such as the Holy See (the political body of the Vatican) and the State of Palestine. Additionally, other territories claim sovereignty but have not achieved full statehood, such as Taiwan (off the coast of China) and Kosovo (claimed by Serbia).

To understand why a seemingly straightforward question about the number of countries in the world is complex, a look at history is needed. The modern world map is a mosaic of borders, states, and nations that have been created and changed throughout history.

Evolution of the Contemporary Political Map

Today's world map includes nations without states, nations in multiple states, and states containing multiple nations. This mixture of situations reflects the distribution of cultures and the evolution of politics, economics, and warfare over the last 600 years.

The Modern Nation-State Concept

For most of European history, no relation existed between the language people spoke and the state to which they belonged. For example, most people who paid allegiance to the king of France in the 1500s did not speak French. Rather, they spoke a regional language. And people who spoke various forms of Italian in the 1600s did not assume that they should all be part of the same state. By the 1700s, the idea that people should live in nation-states had caught hold in some areas, beginning in France and England. However, the map of Europe was still a patchwork of tiny states and a few large multiethnic empires—Russian Empire, Ottoman Empire, etc.

The 1800s saw an explosion of nationalism in Europe. On one hand, groups rebelled against being part of large empires that were controlled by another culture. On the other hand, divided groups wanted to consolidate into unified countries. Between 1858 and 1871, eight separate states in southern Europe combine to form the modern country of Italy.

THE EIGHT INDEPENDENT ITALIAN STATES IN 1858

Forces Unifying and Breaking Apart Countries

One definition of **nationalism** is a nation's desire to create and maintain a state of its own. Since nationalism unifies people, it is an example of a **centripetal force**, one that helps to unify people within a country. There are other centripetal forces that unite people:

- a shared religion—Roman Catholicism unites Mexicans
- external threats—Estonians are united by fear of Russia
- a common language—Japanese share the same language

A counter to centripetal forces would be a **centrifugal force**. This is a force that tends to divide people, break states apart, or even prevent states from forming. For example, religion and language divide the people of Belgium. Most people in the north speak a Dutch language called Flemish and are historically Protestants, while people in the southern regions of Belgium speak French and tend to be Roman Catholics. The capital region of Brussels is officially bilingual in an attempt to foster centripetal forces that unify the people of both regions.

Imperialism and Colonialism

Imperialism and colonialism are related ideas, but they are not the same. **Imperialism** is a broader concept that includes a variety of ways of influencing another country or group of people by direct conquest, economic control, or cultural dominance. **Colonialism** is a particular type of imperialism in which people move into and settle on the land of another country. Examples of

imperialism and colonialism can be found throughout history and all over the world, but modern European imperialism and colonialism are relevant to the current political map because the boundaries of most countries were created by these forces. European imperialism occurred in two distinct waves.

Early Colonialism The first wave of European colonialism was led by Spain and Portugal, and then by France and Britain. These countries established large empires in the Americas, and they were motivated by "God, gold, and glory." They wanted:

- religious influence by spreading their form of Christianity
- economic wealth from exploiting land, labor, and capital to enrich the home country
- political power by expanding their influence throughout the world

The European powers justified their conquests through the legal concept of *terra nullius,* a Latin phrase meaning "land belonging to no one." According to this concept, they could legitimately seize "uncivilized land." The result was the dispossession of indigenous people and the impact of this is still being redressed throughout parts of the world today.

Wars among empires influenced colonial claims. In the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), known in North America as the French and Indian War, the British won control of Canada from France. However, the strain of paying for the war led to conflicts between Britain and its colonies, soon resulting in the American Revolution. U.S. independence then inspired similar movements in other colonies. By 1833, most of Latin America was free from European rule, and nationalism was spreading through the region.

Later Colonialism During the 19ᵗʰ century, the influence of Spanish and Portuguese empires declined, which allowed other European countries to launch a second wave of colonization. The competition to claim resources (to feed factories) and new markets (to sell goods) resulted in Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and Germany seizing control of lands in Africa and Asia.

In 1884 and 1885, representatives from the major empires of Europe met in the German capital of Berlin to lay out claims made on the continent of Africa. The **Berlin Conference** (see Topic 4.5), sometimes known as the Congo Conference, used these claims to form state boundaries in Africa. These boundaries showed little regard to the existing ethno-linguistic, cultural, and political boundaries. As a result, one colony might include a patchwork of rival cultural groups, and another cultural group might be divided among multiple colonies.

The modern country of Nigeria has several major languages and more than 500 individual languages are spoken within its borders. Hausa is widely spoken in the Muslim-dominated regions of the north, while Igbo and Yoruba are regionally spoken farther south where Christianity mixes with traditional religions. As a former British colony, Nigeria's official language is English, which acts a centripetal force for such a diverse population.

Geopolitical Forces Influencing Today's Map

While the European colonies in Africa and Asia did not last long, their legacy was strong. It can be seen in contemporary maps and the links among countries.

Modern Colonial Independence Movements

Colonists, inspired by nationalism, resisted the rule of Europeans, sometimes with violence. People in these European colonies wanted several types of influence:

- economic control over natural resources such as petroleum and precious metals
- political power through free elections
- social changes such as racial equality and religious freedom

However, subject people in colonies wanted **self-determination**, the right to choose their own sovereign government without external influence. With the support of the United Nations, created in 1945, they were slowly successful. Within a century of the Berlin Conference, all European colonial territories had won independence. This process is known as **decolonization**, the undoing of colonization, in which indigenous people reclaim sovereignty over their territory.

While many former colonies gained political independence, they remained in a state of economic dependence. A new form of colonization, *neocolonialism* (see Topic 4.3), emerged in which control over developing countries was exerted through indirect means, whether economic, political, or even cultural power.

Civil Wars in the Developing World

From 1960 through 1970, 32 colonial territories in Africa gained independence. However, since independence was won by colonies rather than by cultural groups, the boundaries imposed by Europe remained in the newly independent states. As a result, cultural boundaries and political boundaries often did not match. Cultural conflicts within countries led to many civil wars. Then, because cultural groups spanned political borders, conflicts in one country often spilled over into other countries.

Among the worst of these wars was in Rwanda in 1994, which led to **genocide**, organized mass killing, in which people are targeted because of their race, religion, ethnicity, or nationality. Before colonization by Belgium, two rival ethnic groups, the Hutu and Tutsi, had competed for control of territory and resources. In 1961, Rwanda won independence. The Hutu majority won elections to govern the country, but the rivalry with the Tutsi continued. In April 1994, the Rwandan president, a Hutu, died when his plane was shot down. Although no one knew then who was responsible, Hutus exacted revenge by killing Tutsis and moderate Hutus on a vast scale. Within just a few months, more than 800,000 Rwandans were killed and nearly 2 million migrated as refugees to neighboring countries.

This pattern of independence followed by civil wars and regional conflicts is nothing new to the political landscape. Serious problems result when national and ethnic rivals are forced to share political space because of boundaries drawn by outside powers. And in many cases, one ethnicity may be spread over several states, so a conflict in one state quickly escalates into a regional one. Today, many of the geopolitical "hotspots" in Africa and the Middle East are difficult to solve because of borders established long ago.

THE SPREAD OF INDEPENDENCE, 1945 TO 2015
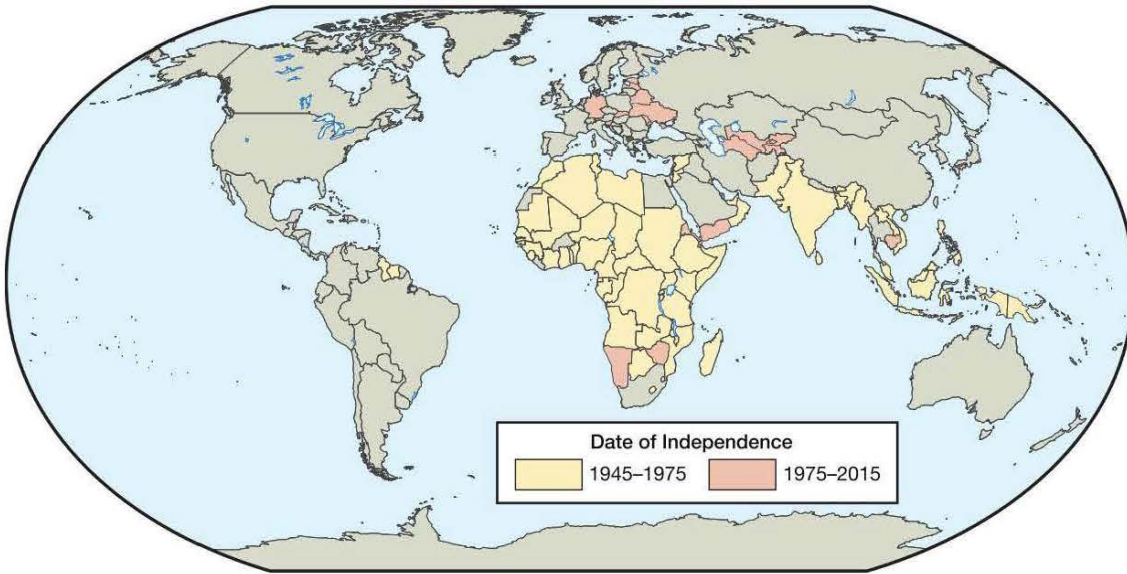
Identify three regions where numerous countries gained independence from 1945 to 1975 and from 1975 to 2015.

The Cold War and Devolution

The **Cold War** was a period of diplomatic, political, and military rivalry between the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR or Soviet Union), a confederation of 15 republics, including Russia. It started at the end of World War II (1945), continued through the collapse of the Berlin Wall (1989), and ended with the breakup of the Soviet Union (1991).

Although the United States and the Soviet Union did not fight a direct war against each other, they fought several proxy wars—by providing military and financial support to the countries involved—in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. For the United States, the largest of these conflicts were in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. The superpowers wanted to extend their spheres of influence, or the areas over which they had some degree of control. This meant winning allies in other countries and thwarting their rival from doing the same. The American-Soviet contest often influenced the newly independent states emerging out of colonialism.
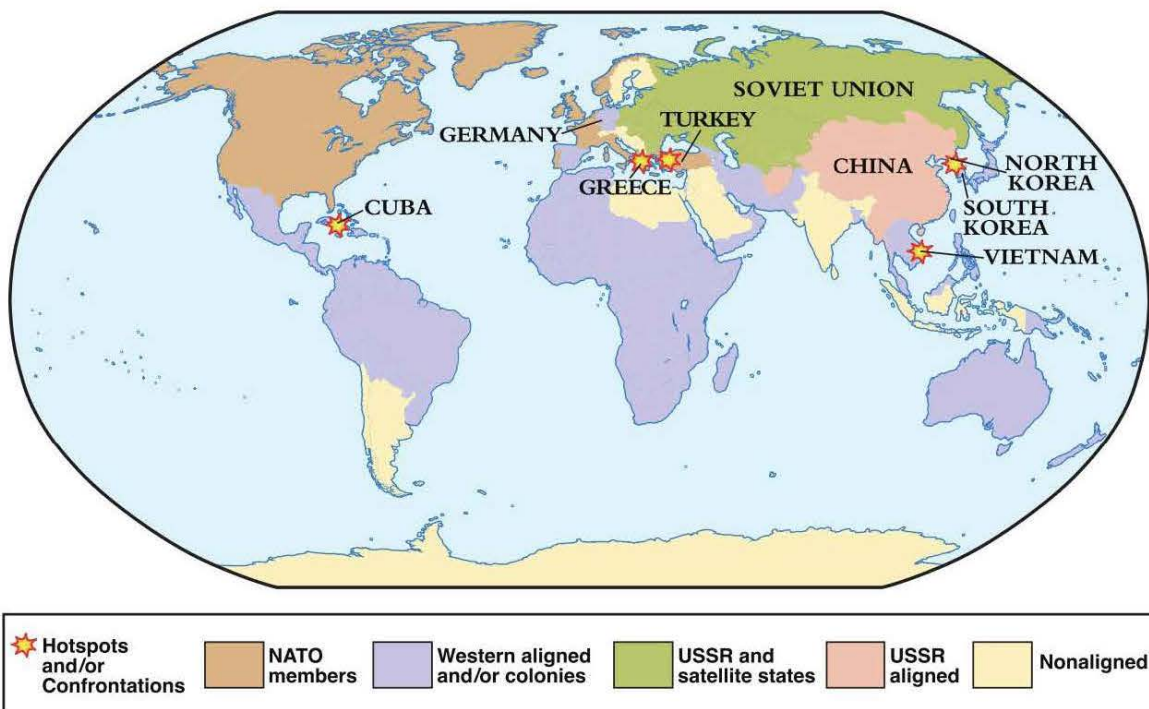
After World War II, the frontline for the Cold War was Europe, where a tenuous peace divided the continent between East and West. Eastern European countries were liberated from Nazi Germany and later occupied by the Soviet army, became Soviet **satellite states**, or a state dominated by another politically

and economically. Attempts by Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 to break away from Soviet domination were put down with overwhelming force.

Germany's status was complicated. Its territory and its capital city (Berlin) were split between the democratic and capitalist-friendly West Germany and West Berlin and the Communist Soviet Union-dominated East Germany and East Berlin. In 1961, to prevent people from defecting from the Soviet sphere of influence, the Berlin Wall was constructed by East Germany, physically demarcating and ideologically representing the deep divide between the two worlds.

COLD WAR BLOCS, c. 1960

| ☆ Hotspots and/or Confrontations | NATO members | Western aligned and/or colonies | USSR and satellite states | USSR aligned | Nonaligned |

The Collapse of Communism

In the late 1980s, new leadership in the Soviet Union began to relax its grip over satellite states in Eastern Europe. Finally, in November 1989, citizens of East and West Germany brought down the wall that had long divided the city of Berlin. Within two years, Germany had reunited and former satellite states of Eastern Europe were holding free elections without Soviet influence. Some states experienced a relatively peaceful transition, such as Poland with the Solidarity movement led by Lech Walesa. However, others endured more violence. In Romania, a 1989 revolution resulted in the execution of the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife. But change in Europe did not end there.

The Soviet Union began to collapse as well. Under extreme economic duress, and significant social and political division within the Soviet Union, the 15 republics were granted more autonomy and self-rule. This process in which one or more regions are given increased autonomy by the central political unit is known as **devolution**.

FORMER REPUBLICS OF THE SOVIET UNION

Each of the former republics became an independent state. Identify three states that gained independence in Eastern Europe and in Central Asia.

After 1990, the political boundaries were once again altered. The collapse of communism and the Soviet Union resulted in the creation of 15 independent states from former Soviet republics, with Russia as the largest. This series of events significantly altered the modern map of Europe and Asia.

Many former *satellite states* made a peaceful transition into the post-communist world. For example, in 1993, Czechoslovakia divided into the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia, predominantly along ethnolinguistic lines. This event has been called the "Velvet Divorce," since the transition was so smooth.

However, the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1991 was complicated and violent. Long-standing ethnic tensions erupted. Hundreds of thousands died in clashes between Serbs, Bosnians, and others before a handful of independent countries emerged. Many died because of *ethnic cleansing* (see Topic 4.8), the forced removal of a minority ethnic group from a territory. Geographically, this region was a *shatterbelt* (see Topic 4.5), a place that suffers instability because it is located between two very different and contentious regions.

Changes in the Balance of Power

The collapse of communism and the Soviet Union drastically changed the balance of power in Europe and throughout the world. Some former communist countries of Eastern Europe, as well as some independent states, joined the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)—the

Western military alliance, formed in 1949 to oppose Soviet military power in Europe. (See Topic 4.9.) By the early 21st century, the balance of economic, political, and military power tilted toward Western Europe and the United States.

This power shift frightened Russian leaders. They reacted by providing military support to pro-Russian groups. For example, in 2008 a border dispute developed between the Republic of Georgia and Russia over land known as South Ossetia. Involvement of the Russian military led to a five-day war. As a result of this short conflict, Russia asserted its influence and dominance beyond its borders.

Russia also set its sights on Crimea in 2014. The Crimean Peninsula lies on the northern edge of the Black Sea and existed as a *semiautonomous republic* (see Topic 4.1) within the borders of Ukraine after the Soviet Union's downfall. However, shortly after the Winter Olympic Games in Russia in 2014, Russian troops took over several sites around Crimea. Many countries, including Ukraine, vehemently condemned this annexation as a violation of international law. However, Russia defended this action under the principle of self-determination. Russia claimed part of Crimea, yet a majority of states still regarded the region as an integral part of Ukraine. (See Topic 4.3 for more on the strategic importance of Crimea.)

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the processes that have shaped contemporary political geography?*

Process	Impact on Political Geography

KEY TERMS

nationalism	self-determination
centripetal force	decolonization
centrifugal force	genocide
imperialism	Cold War
colonialism	satellite states
Berlin Conference	devolution

Political Power and Territoriality

Essential Question: What are the concepts of political power and territoriality as used by geographers?

The concepts of power, territoriality, and boundaries are often intertwined and dependent on one another. Economic systems, cultural patterns and processes, and political systems have shaped various theories of how power is distributed on the political landscape. Physical geography and the natural landscape impact the distribution of power within and between political units, as well as the form and function of boundaries. The forms of governance on international, national, regional, and local scales are products of the human and physical landscapes.

Concepts of Political Power and Territoriality

Geopolitics is the study of the effects of geography on politics and relations among states. More than just political power, geopolitics also relates to trade, resource management, and the environment on a global scale. A key concept in geopolitics is **territoriality**, or a willingness by a person or a group of people to defend space they claim. People express their territoriality when they influence others or shape events by asserting control over a space. At the local scale, for example, towns and cities lay claim to municipal districts. At the national scale, states administer and defend their borders, especially those that lie adjacent to neighboring countries. States also extend their territoriality into the oceans and bodies of water within their jurisdictions (see Topic 4.5 for more on the Law of the Sea). However, states maintain sovereignty within their borders through the consent of the people who reside there, in addition to the government's ability to negotiate at the international level.

Territoriality Connects Culture and Economy

Defining territoriality may be relatively easy, but applying it is complex. Under the influence of cultural forces and economic interests, people often disagree on how to allocate control of territories. Maps that show the boundaries of a state as clear, precise lines might suggest those boundaries are well defined. However, people might hotly disagree over the boundaries, or simply ignore them in reality. Similarly, a state's sovereignty might be well established on paper, but people might not fully accept it.

Religious Conflicts One example of the connection of territoriality to culture is the relationship between Sunni and Shia Muslims. These two

branches of Islam divided on the question of who should succeed Muhammad after his death in 632. They have remained divided ever since, a division that has sometimes contributed to violence.

In recent years, the conflict within Islam has been clearest in the rivalry between Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia and Shia-dominated Iran. Adding to the religious conflict between the countries is an ethnic difference: the Saudis are Arabs and the Iranians are Persians. Not only are these people devoted to their cultures and beliefs, but they also feel attached to the lands where their ancestors lived and where they now inhabit. Each country has tried to expand its power over territory, which has led to tension and instability.

SHIA REGIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST
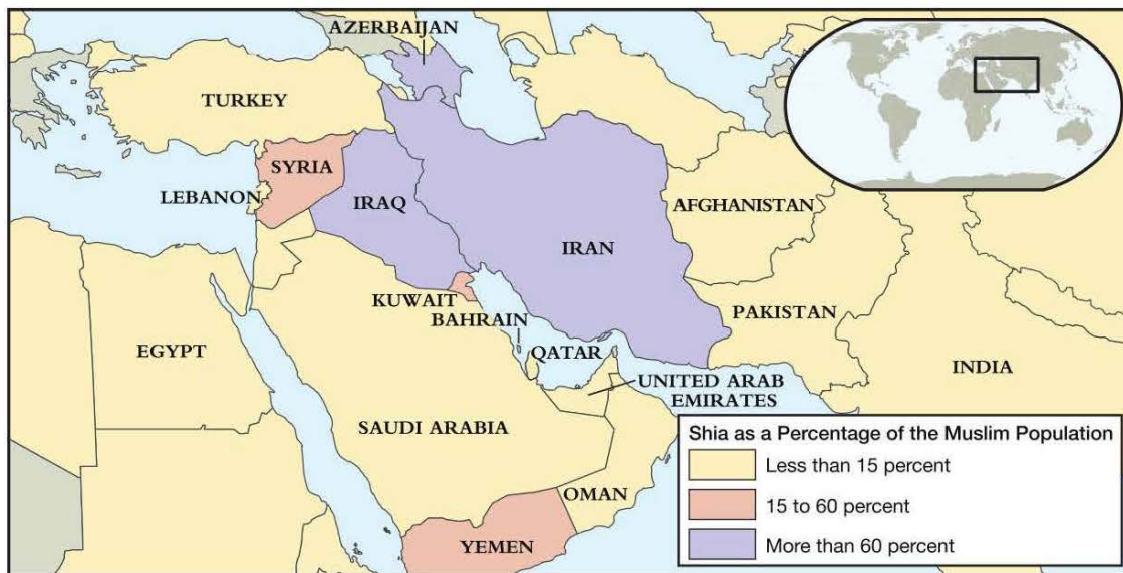
Identify countries that have over 15 percent Shia population.

Economic Conflicts Territoriality has always been closely connected to economic issues. In recent years, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, Taiwan, and China have claimed sovereignty over the Spratly Islands—an isolated group of islands in the South China Sea. Tensions run high on the subject in the region. But why are these countries seemingly willing to risk conflict over a group of islands, islets, and reefs? The answers are, in large part, economic:

- Experts believe that significant, but unconfirmed, petroleum reserves exist in the area.
- The region's fishing grounds supply work and food for many throughout the entire region.
- Major international shipping lanes pass through the area.

At times, each of the countries involved (except Brunei) occupied at least part of the island group. China attempted to expand the size of its holdings through dredging and land reclamation—by building up small reefs into full-fledged islands—from which to better push for and enforce its claims of sovereignty.

Neocolonialism

In the aftermath of World War I and accelerating after World War II, worldwide decolonization occurred. (See Topic 4.2.) Exacerbated by high tariffs (taxes on trade) and wartime devastation, as well as economic uncertainty during the Great Depression (1929–1939), the profitability of European colonial possessions was drastically reduced. Scores of new countries gained independence across Asia and Africa. By 1975, virtually all former colonies had achieved self-determination. Gaining political independence was sometimes a long and arduous process, often with violent events involved. For example, bloodshed occurred during India's split from Britain and Algeria's break from France.

Economic Self-Determination Gaining economic independence was equally challenging. Many of these newly independent nations had focused on exporting one or perhaps only a few cash crops or light industrial products when they were colonies. In turn, these nations relied heavily on European manufactured goods, which resulted in the value of their imports being greater than that of their exports.

Additionally, these former colonies were culturally influenced by longstanding European traditions and often manipulated by foreign governments even after achieving independence. Apart from the previous direct control of these territories, in many cases, a new system of colonialism, or **neocolonialism,** emerged. In this system, economic, political, or even cultural control was indirectly exerted over developing countries. For example, transnational corporations based in European countries continued to control the extraction of natural resources through mining and the export of coffee, cacao, bananas, and other crops on plantations in developing countries.

Modern Globalization After World War II and the establishment of the United Nations (UN), trade barriers were dramatically lowered, and a new era of globalization emerged. Many people and companies in the former colonies benefited from increased access to regional and global markets. While the UN and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provided food and economic aid for these countries, several European states and the United States offered conditional aid. Many newly independent states had developed powerful central governments that maintained tight controls over domestic businesses and international commerce, which, at times, had a negative effect on economic growth. The United States and countries of Europe offered loans to many of these developing countries, if they reduced regulations and opened up to more free trade.

While some have praised policies like these in helping the new states modernize their economies, others have decried the effect of leading these countries toward dependence and subservience. Despite efforts to maintain territoriality, some less-developed countries (LDCs) have experienced massive debt obligations that have spiraled out of their control and, as a result, have been politically dominated by richer nations. Neocolonialism promotes a similar type of imbalanced relationship found in traditional colonialism.
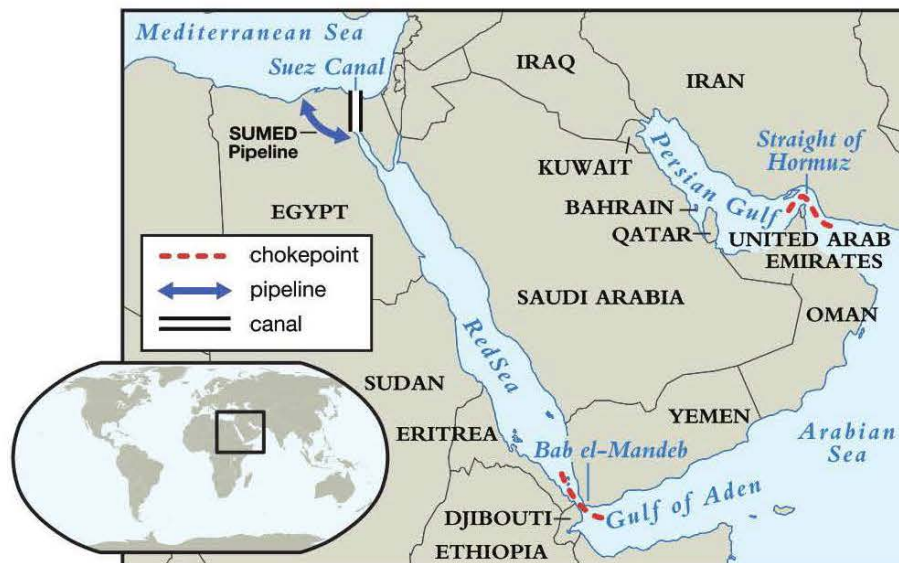
Choke Points

A **choke point** is a place of physical congestion between wider regions of movement and interaction. Land-based choke points can be natural valleys or bridges. However, the most vital choke points in the world today are predominantly water-based, such as straits and canals. Around 90 percent, or $8 trillion annually, of all global goods are transported by sea.

Since the onset of the industrial age—beginning in the 18ᵗʰ century—and especially in modern times, power and wealth is increasingly derived from controlling strategic maritime areas of the world. The most densely populated cities and regions reside along coastal areas that are crucial to the global movement and distribution of resources. Geopolitically, countries that claim jurisdiction over these choke points often wield an inordinate amount of international clout and can benefit economically from these locations through fees and taxes, such as tolls, tariffs, and customs duties.

Bab el-Mandeb ("Gate of Tears") strait is a choke point that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden north of the Horn of Africa. It is vital to the flow of goods and traffic and has garnered international attention by nations attempting to control the area. The United States has several military bases around the Bab el-Mandeb, including a naval base in Djibouti, which demonstrates the geopolitical and economic importance of locations such as these. Many other countries also possess military bases in strategic areas, and they have gone to great lengths to ensure that shipping and travel can continue unimpeded.

Arguably, the world's most important choke point is the Strait of Hormuz, lying between the Gulf of Oman and the Persian Gulf. Around one-third of the world's natural gas and around one-quarter of the world's oil passes through this narrow waterway.

ARABIAN PENINSULA CHOKEPOINTS

Source: eia.gov

Three of the world's most strategically important choke points, the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, and Bab el-Mandeb are around the Arabian Peninsula. Protecting free and open access to these waterways is vital in maintaining the global flow of goods and people.

At the north end of the Black Sea, Crimea affords Russia even greater proximity to a key choke point, the Turkish Straits. In 2014, Russia claimed Crimea, which had been within the borders of Ukraine since 1992. (See Topic 4.2.) Aside from the demographics, in which around two-thirds of the population is ethnically Russian, Crimea boasts a geographic advantage for Russia. These narrow waterways allow access to the Aegean and Mediterranean seas and, more importantly, increased access for global commerce. Oil and natural gas account for around two-thirds of Russia's exports and almost one-third of its gross domestic product (GDP). The Crimea enables Russian petrochemical corporations increased accessibility to the Turkish Straits. Despite the protestations of Ukraine, and the bulk of the international community decrying Russia's actions as illegal, Russia has maintained control of the area.

WORLD OIL CHOKE POINTS
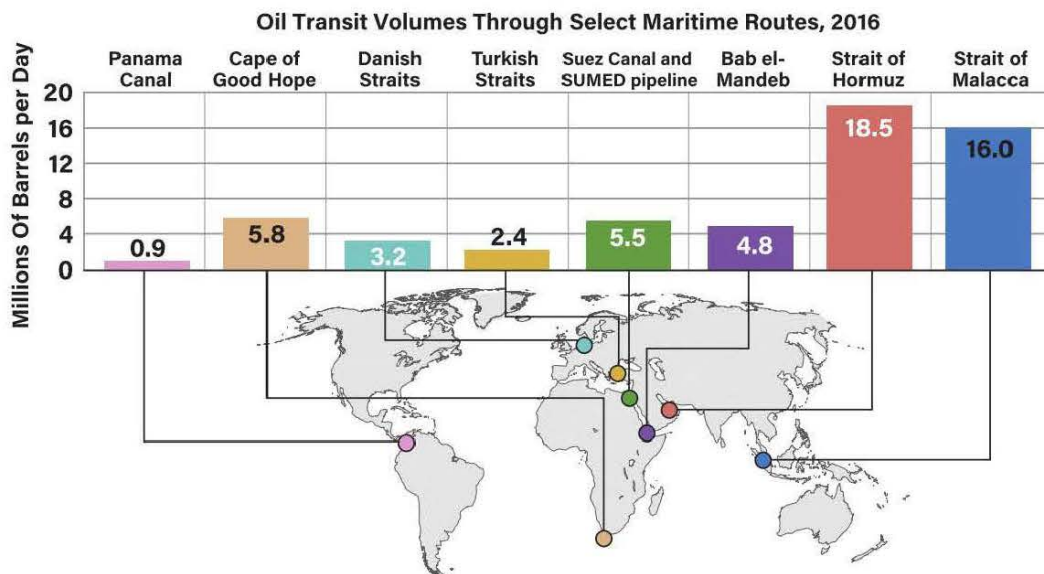
Source: US Energy Information Administration

Explain the importance of choke points for oil and other globally-traded goods.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the concepts of political power and territoriality as used by geographers?*

Political Power and Territoriality Concepts	Descriptions

KEY TERMS

geopolitics

neocolonialism

territoriality

choke point

The United States has been roughly the same size since 1867 when the country purchased Alaska. Since then, the United States has added important islands, including Hawaii and Puerto Rico, but all additions have been small in size. However, there is no guarantee that this stability will continue into the future.

Better Communication and Transportation

One of the forces that might reshape the political map of the United States is technology. Computers, the Internet, and cell phones have increased the connections among people across space. Technology could be a centripetal force. As people communicate more closely across long distances, variations from region to region might diminish. The United States might become a more tightly united country, with less cultural variation than in the past.

After World War II, the United States built an interstate highway system that was designed to connect the country. Many rural communities became more connected to cities as people traveled via highway across the country. Later, jet air travel created faster connections between cities. A negative of air travel was that people flew from city to city, often flying over rural regions, decreasing the connectivity of these areas.

Or the technology could be a centrifugal force. As Americans find people with whom they share interests and values in other places in the country, they could relate more to them than to the neighbors in their community. Place might become less important.

Movement of People

Migrations of people could also have mixed results for American political unity. The migration of people from one region to another could reduce regional variation in politics. For example, in most presidential elections in the past century, states in the Northeast and the Southeast have voted for opposing candidates. Will continued migration from the Northeast to the Southeast change this? Will the two regions become more similar politically, either because the migrants take their voting behavior with them or because the migrants adapt to the behavior of their new neighbors?

1. What challenges does the large size of the United States pose for the unity of the country?

2. How can communication technology act as both a centripetal and centrifugal force within a country?

3. What impact could internal migration have on the political landscape of the United States?

Oil Transit Volumes Through Select Maritime Routes, 2016
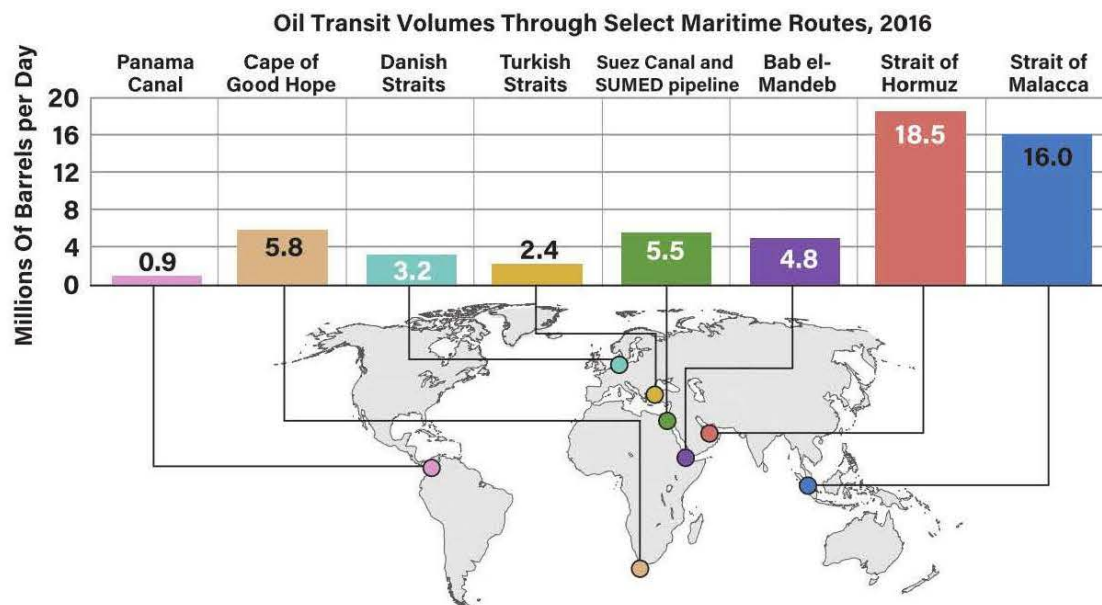
Many choke points have the words "strait" or "canal" as part of their toponyms. This represents a key intersection where human geography meets physical geography. The study of geopolitics helps us better understand the complex relationship between people, places, and power.

Three of the choke points regarding petroleum transit have been discussed already—Bab el-Mandeb, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Turkish Straits.

1. Describe the locations of the choke points using the concepts of countries and regions.

2. Explain the importance of each of the following choke points:

   A. Panama Canal

   B. Cape of Good Hope

   C. Danish Straits

   D. Suez Canal

   E. Strait of Malacca
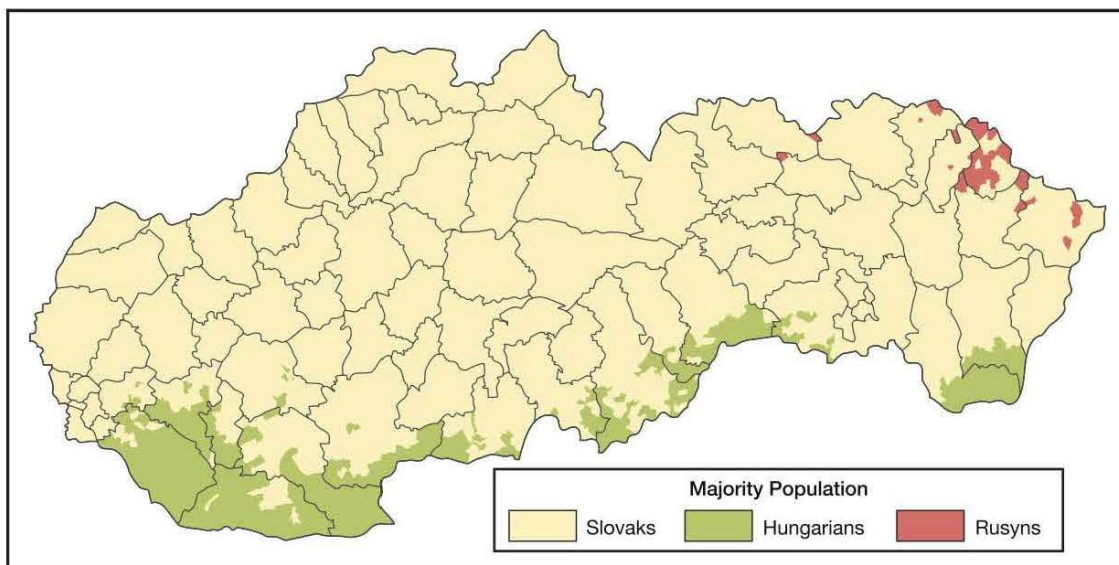
CHAPTER 8 REVIEW:
Political Processes and Power

Topics 4.1–4.3

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is NOT a necessary criterion for a state?

   (A) Sovereignty
   (B) Defined boundary
   (C) Common culture and identity
   (D) Recognition by other states
   (E) Permanent population

Questions 2 and 3 refer to the map and table about Slovakia.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN SLOVAKIA	
Group	**Percentage of the Population**
Slovak	81%
Romani	9%
Hungarian	8%
Other	2%

2. Which term best describes Slovakia?

(A) Stateless nation

(B) Multinational state

(C) Empire

(D) Dependent territory

(E) Autonomous region

3. Which of the following best explains why the Romani ethnic group is identified on the chart but does not appear on the map?

(A) The scale of analysis of the data reflects that the Romani are a large minority group but are not a majority in any region.

(B) The map shows only the nodal regions in Slovakia.

(C) The friction of distance limits what information can be shown in each type of source.

(D) The data in the chart is not reliable because Slovakia is a former satellite state of the USSR.

(E) The map uses qualitative data while the chart uses quantitative data, creating an inconsistency between the information.

Question 4 refers to the map below.
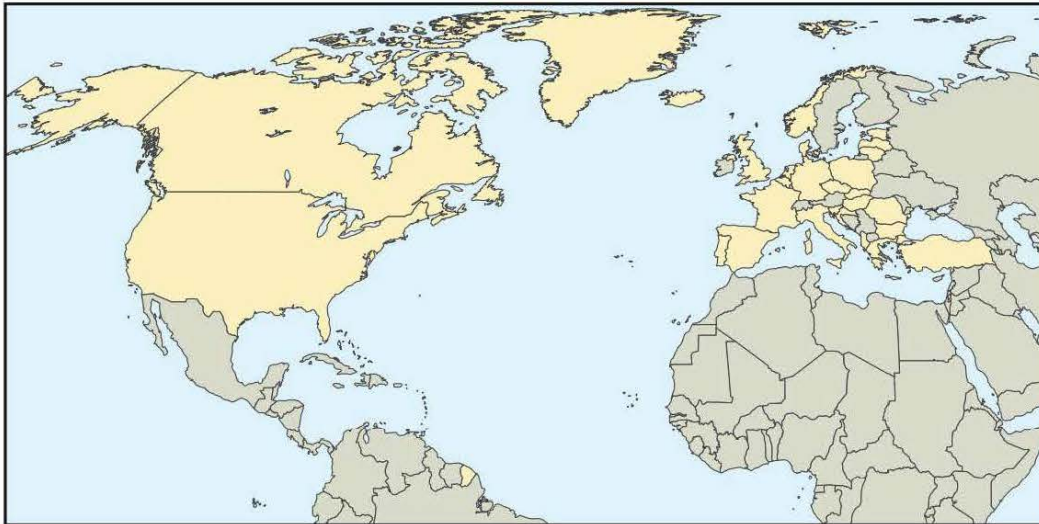
4. Countries highlighted in the darker shade in the map above represent most or all of the members which of the following organizations?

(A) North Atlantic Treaty Organization

(B) Warsaw Pact

(C) United Nations

(D) League of Nations

(E) European Union

Questions 5 and 6 refer to the chart below.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN MYANMAR (BURMA)		
Group	**Percentage of the Population**	**Traits**
Burmans	68%	• Spread throughout the center of the country • Speak the dominant language of the country
Shan	9%	• Concentrated in eastern region • Speak their own language
Kachin	7%	• Concentrated in northeast region • Speak their own language • Desire independence
Other	16%	• Government recognizes more than 130 ethnic groups • Many desire independence

5. Based on the information in the chart, Myanmar is a
    (A) nation
    (B) nation-state
    (C) multinational state
    (D) stateless nation
    (E) multistate nation

6. Based on the information in the chart, the lands of the Kachin can be considered
    (A) a multistate nation
    (B) an autonomous region
    (C) a nation-state
    (D) a stateless nation
    (E) a newly independent state

7. Which of the following would describe a positive development for a state that became independent through decolonization?
    (A) Establishing territoriality by claiming sovereignty over its lands
    (B) Maintaining economic neocolonial ties with its former mother country
    (C) Engaging in ethnic cleansing of a minority group within its borders
    (D) Existing along a shatterbelt between two powerful states
    (E) Experiencing centrifugal forces due to multiple ethnicities

1. After 1945 many of the countries in Africa won their independence. Today, independent states are the primary building block of not just Africa but the entire world. Use the map to answer the questions that follow.

AFRICA TODAY
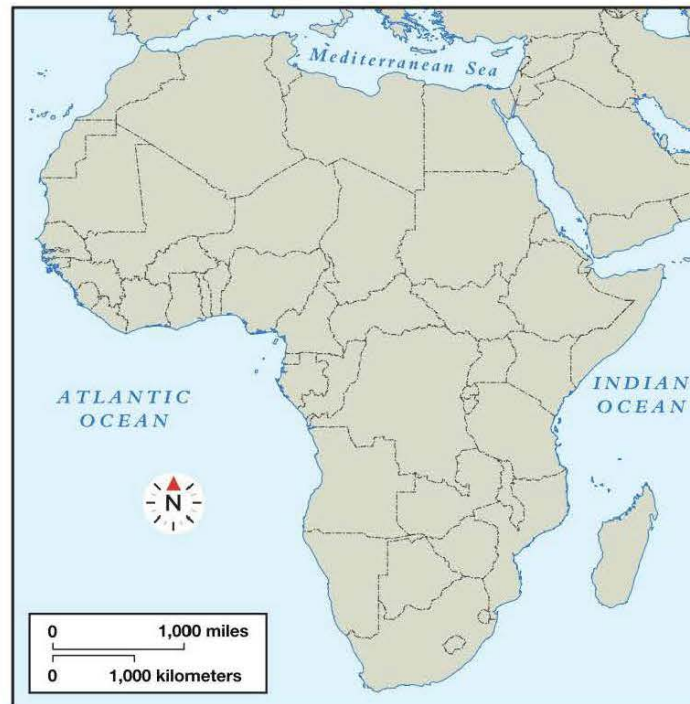
(A) Identify TWO characteristics of a state.

(B) Explain the difference between a nation and a state.

(C) Explain the role that imperialism played in creating the borders of modern Africa.

(D) Identify a country in Africa that had a civil war after 1945, and explain ONE centrifugal force that caused the conflict. (2 points)

(E) Define the concept of stateless nation and provide a real-world geographic example.

(F) Describe ONE example of a multistate nation.

CHAPTER 9

Political Boundaries and Forms of Governance

Topics 4.4–4.7

Topic 4.4 Defining Political Boundaries

Learning Objective: Define types of political boundaries used by geographers. (IMP-4.A)

Topic 4.5 The Functions of Political Boundaries

Learning Objective: Explain the nature and function of international and internal boundaries. (IMP-4.B)

Topic 4.6 Internal Boundaries

Learning Objective: Explain the nature and function of international and internal boundaries. (IMP-4.B)

Topic 4.7 Forms of Governance

Learning Objectives: Define federal and unitary states. (IMP-4.C)
Explain how federal and unitary states affect spatial organization. (IMP-4.D)

Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; Who rules the World-Island commands the world.

—Sir Halford John Mackinder, *British geographer*, 1919

Depicted is the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Despite the name, it is the militarized boundary between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK). (See Topic 4.4 for more about militarized boundaries.)

Defining Political Boundaries

Essential Question: What are the types of political boundaries used by geographers?

The most common type of map used is a reference map, in which physical and cultural features are shown and usually identified. One expects a map, at any scale, to include boundaries that have been clearly delimited. Whether at the local, regional, or national scale, boundaries are an integral part of our lives. Some are invisible to the eye and others are clearly demarcated, yet all serve some political or functional purpose.

In essence, any contemporary political boundary can be categorized in one of two ways, physical or cultural. **Physical geographic boundaries** are natural barriers between areas such as oceans, deserts, and mountains. For example, the Missouri River divides Iowa and Nebraska, and the Himalayan Mountains separate India and China.

By contrast, **cultural boundaries** divide people according to some cultural division, such as language, religion, or ethnicity. A cultural boundary may exist in the midst of a gradual change over space. For example, in China, cuisine was once divided into two regions: wheat-based in the north and rice-based in the south. However, no exact line has ever divided the two regions sharply. A boundary can be classified as possessing both physical and cultural attributes.

Classifications of Boundaries

While classifying political boundaries as physical or cultural enables us to identify what a border is, geographers have developed a more in-depth classification system that provides greater context on how borders develop over time.

Genetic Classification of Boundaries

There are four genetic types (classified as to how they were generated) of political boundaries: antecedent, subsequent, superimposed, and relic.

Antecedent Boundary This type of boundary preceded the development of the cultural landscape. For boundaries, significant physical obstacles—such as oceans or mountains—possess a static aspect in that they feature a relatively unpopulated zone between populated areas. They also possess a kinetic aspect in that they hinder connections and interactions between people in adjacent regions. An example includes the straight-line boundaries for states across the western frontier of the emerging United States. Political boundaries like these

were established before a large population was present and remained in place as people increasingly occupied these regions.

Antecedent boundaries are typically based on physical features. Since humans are terrestrial beings and need to live on land for survival, the unpopulated oceans such as the Atlantic and Pacific make for logical antecedent boundaries. The Andes Mountains form the long-reaching eastern boundary of Chile, naturally separating it from Bolivia and Argentina. However, antecedent boundaries that do not present a significant physical obstacle, such as small hills or rivers, tend to make less effective political boundaries.

While rivers possess a static benefit in that they maintain an unpopulated zone between populated areas, they tend to facilitate more connections and interactions. Transboundary freshwater sources, such as the Jordan River, have resulted in competing claims among Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, and Palestine. Just because an antecedent boundary exists, it does not necessarily mean it is effective.

Subsequent Boundary This boundary is typically created while the cultural landscape is evolving and is subject to change over time. These boundaries are characteristically **ethnographic** in nature, meaning they are usually related to cultural phenomena. They may be drawn to accommodate ethnic, religious, linguistic, or economic differences among groups. Subsequent boundaries are often altered as a result of non-cultural developments such as governmental negotiations or war. Beginning in the mid-16th century, the monarch of Scotland and England encouraged emigration to Ireland, which was then under English rule. Many Scots and English Protestants settled in the northern region of predominantly Roman Catholic Ireland. Over the years, resentment and violence broke out between the groups over internal borders and political influence in the region. In 1921, Northern Ireland officially became part of the United Kingdom, separating from the southern portion of the island—the Republic of Ireland. A commission was formed to draw the new border based on the religious and political cultural landscape.

Superimposed Boundary This type of boundary is drawn by outside powers and may have ignored existing cultural patterns. These boundaries often lack conformity to natural features and, therefore, were superimposed on the landscape. Between 1884 and 1885, the **Berlin Conference** paved the way for colonization of Africa or what Europeans regarded as "effective occupation" of the continent. At the time of the conference, only some coastal areas were colonized by the Europeans and around 80 percent of the continent was under traditional and local control. As a result of the conference, a series of superimposed boundaries were established, initially with little knowledge of the terrain or the cultural borders.

One of the legacies of this "Scramble for Africa" was the creation of around 50 irregularly shaped countries out of the more than 1,000 indigenous cultures that inhabited the continent. Of the 54 current African countries, 17 are **landlocked states**, or without territory connected to an ocean. The increased cost of importing and exporting goods through neighboring countries presents

these states with a perpetual geographic and political disadvantage. Governments of landlocked states are inherently dealing from a weakened position and struggle to effectively negotiate with neighboring countries. While landlocked states, such as Botswana and Rwanda, have recently prospered through effective business growth policies, many landlocked states area among the most-impoverished and least-developed countries in the world.

LANDLOCKED COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD
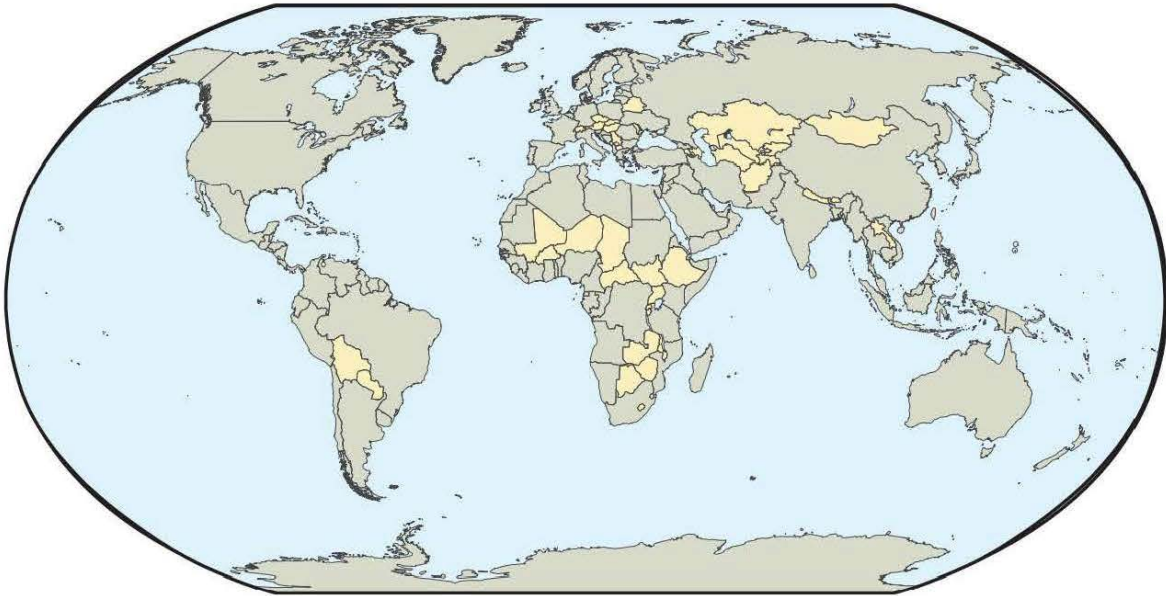
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Which regions of the world have the most landlocked states? Describe an economic and political challenge that landlocked states face.

Relic Boundary This is a boundary that has been abandoned for political purposes, but evidence of it still exists on the landscape. These boundaries are nonfunctional in the political sense but are sometimes preserved for historic purposes. Constructed in 1961, the Berlin Wall that divided East and West Berlin was famously torn down in 1989. Toward the end of the Cold War, East and West Germany reunited, but portions of the Berlin Wall are still upright, maintained as a tourist attraction and symbol of a past age. The Great Wall of China is also a relic boundary, serving no political separation between states, but still very visible on the landscape.

Geometric and Consequent Boundaries

In addition to classifying boundaries by how they were generated, geographers classify boundaries by what they follow. Do they conform to existing cultural boundaries or do they conform to physical features on the landscape?

In contrast to a physical boundary, a **geometric boundary** is a straight line or arc drawn by people that does not closely follow any physical feature. Historically, many boundaries have fallen upon lines of latitude or longitude, and since the surface of the earth is rounded, extended boundaries may more accurately form arcs. The majority of the boundary between the United States and Canada follows along the 49th parallel (latitude). After World War II,

North and South Korea were divided along the 38th parallel. Many geometric boundaries are created as internal divisions within a state or territory, such as the political boundaries of Colorado and Wyoming.

A type of subsequent border that takes into account already-existing cultural or physical landscapes is a **consequent boundary**. A border that is drawn taking into account language, ethnicity, religion, or other cultural traits it is a **cultural consequent boundary**. Also, these boundaries are created with the cultural landscape as a primary consideration. Political boundaries of this nature would be consequent upon an already-existing cultural phenomenon, such as the partition of the British colony of India in 1947, creating a Hindu-majority India and a Muslim-majority Pakistan.

Unlike geometric borders, a division that uses already-existing natural features that divide a territory such as rivers, deserts, or mountains is a **physical consequent boundary**. An example would be the Pyrenees Mountains that run across the northern edge of the Iberian Peninsula, separating Spain from France, and completely surrounding the country of Andorra.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF BOUNDARIES		
Type	**Definition**	**Example**
Antecedent	A boundary established before a large population was present	The boundary of the Pyranees Mountains established between Spain and France
Subsequent (Ethnographic)	A boundary drawn to accommodate religious, ethnic, linguistic, or economic differences	The boundary between Northern Ireland (part of the United Kingdom) and the Republic of Ireland
Superimposed	A boundary drawn by outside powers	The boundary between Mali and Mauritania (common throughout Africa and Southwest Asia)
Relic	A boundary that no longer exists, but is still evident on the landscape	The boundary between East and West Germany (states that are now combined)
Geometric	A straight line or arc drawn by people that does not closely follow any physical feature	The boundary between the United States and Canada along the 49th parallel
Consequent	A type of subsequent boundary that takes into account existing cultural or physical landscapes	The boundary between India and Pakistan created for religious reasons

Protection of Boundaries

Accurately defining and describing political boundaries are important tasks for geographers in understanding the complex structure of states and the interaction between them. There are many ways to define boundaries and, furthermore, a single border can possess the attributes of several types. For instance, most superimposed boundaries are geometric. Additionally, there are

other border terms that deal with the protective nature of borders and can meet some of the previously discussed classifications.

An **open boundary** is unguarded and people can cross it easily, with little or no political intervention. These borders only occur between countries that have maintained friendly relations with each other over long periods of time. Most states within the European Union (EU) fit this category. In 1985, the Schengen Agreement abolished most border checks between member states (of the then European Economic Community)—making most of the continent effectively borderless. With goods and people flowing freely from one country to another, people seemed less willing to turn to violence to settle disputes.

A **militarized boundary** is one that is heavily guarded and discourages crossing. While many of these borders only have a limited military presence, others are fortified, using a constructed barrier to prevent the flow of people. In 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell, there were 15 border walls in the entire world. As of 2020, there were five times that number. For example, India has constructed a guarded 1,700-mile barbed wire fence along its border with Bangladesh to curb immigration and smuggling.

One of the most well-known barriers in the world today is the Korean DMZ (demilitarized zone) that separates North and South Korea. The 160-mile long, 2.5-mile wide strip of land serves as a buffer zone between the rival states. It was established in 1953 after the cease-fire that ended the Korean War. In 2020, the United States had more than 28,000 troops stationed in South Korea along the DMZ, a deterrent to any potential aggression by North Korea. The DMZ almost completely blocks the flow of trade and people.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the types of political boundaries used by geographers?*

Type of Boundary	Function of Boundary

KEY TERMS

physical geographic boundaries

cultural boundaries

antecedent boundary

subsequent boundary

ethnographic

superimposed boundary

Berlin Conference

landlocked states

relic boundary

geometric boundary

consequent boundary

cultural consequent boundary

physical consequent boundary

open boundary

militarized boundary

The Function of Political Boundaries

Essential Question: What are the nature and function of international boundaries?

When most people think of a boundary, they focus on what is represented on the surface of the earth. However, boundaries are actually vertical planes that cut through the subsoil below, rise into the airspace above, and even extend into outer space.

Political borders serve a vital function as dividing lines between countries, states, provinces, territories, counties, cities, towns, villages, and municipalities. Political borders also exist to separate bodies of water, especially those that possess multiple claims to the same areas. To fully comprehend the complex interactions between political entities, an understanding is needed of boundary formations and functions, as well as why disputes erupt around them.

International and Internal Boundaries

In theory, boundaries of all kinds exist to add clarity. Boundaries signal where one political entity begins and another ends. This helps people know what territory is theirs to administer and what belongs to another country. But when neighbors disagree on where the line that separates them should be, boundaries become the subject of conflict. Throughout history, uncertain boundaries have been a frequent cause of bloodshed and war.

Formation of Boundaries

Boundaries represent changes in the use of space from one political entity to another. Crossing a boundary implies that some rules, expectations, or behaviors change. When moving across a formal political boundary, these rules are called laws. Boundaries can be identified in various ways:

- A **defined boundary** is established by a legal document, such as a treaty, that divides one entity from another (invisible line). The entity could range from a country—in which points of latitude and longitude are specified—to a single plot of real estate—in which points in the landscape are described.

- A **delimited boundary** is drawn on a map by a cartographer to show the limits of a space.

- A **demarcated boundary** is one identified by physical objects placed on the landscape. The demarcation may be as simple as a sign or as complex as a set of fences and walls.

Some very influential boundaries are not set formally. Informal boundaries include ones marking the spheres of influence by powerful countries at the regional scale, such as the Monroe Doctrine. In 1821, President James Monroe warned Europeans that the United States would oppose any attempts they made to expand their influence in the Americas. Informal boundaries also exist at the local level, such as those dividing the neighborhoods controlled by various street gangs.

International Boundary Disputes

As the number of states has increased over the last century, so too have international boundary disputes. There are four main categories of boundary disputes: definitional, locational (territorial), operational (function), and allocational (resource).

A **definitional boundary dispute** occurs when two or more parties disagree over how to interpret the legal documents or maps that identify the boundary. These types of disputes often occur with antecedent boundaries. (See Topic 4.4.) One example is the boundary between Chile and Argentina. The elevated crests of the Andes Mountains serve as the boundary, but since most of the southern lands were neither settled nor accurately mapped, control of this territory lies in dispute.

Boundary disputes that center on where a boundary should be, how it is *delimited* (mapped), or *demarcated* are known as **locational boundary disputes**. These disputes are also called **territorial disputes** because of the fundamental question of who possesses the land. An example of a locational dispute was the post-World War I boundary between Germany and Poland. Germans disputed the location because it controlled the land prior to the war, but the border drawn after the war left many ethnically German people on the Polish side. This led to **irredentism**, a type of expansionism when one country seeks to annex territory where it has cultural ties to part of the population or historical claims to the land. Many groups are divided between countries by a border. When this occurs a desire to unify their nation is a common national goal and can lead to irredentist feelings but not always action.

An **operational boundary dispute,** or **functional dispute,** centers not on where a boundary is but how it functions. Disagreements can arise related to trade, transportation, or migration. As refugees fled Syria and attempted to enter Europe during the 2011 civil war, Europeans viewed their national boundaries differently. Refugees began migrating from southern Europe to the interior seeking safe haven. Interior countries of Europe often viewed the countries to the south and east as responsible for stopping migrants, while others felt the boundaries should stay open in order to help the refugees. Additional operational boundaries can occur with rivers and choke points that serve as boundaries. Questions related to who controls the transportation and shipping on a river or choke point can cause disagreements.

When a boundary separates natural resources that may be used by both countries, it is referred to as an **allocational boundary dispute**, or **resource**

dispute. When it comes to natural resources, boundaries serve as vertical planes that extend both up into the sky and down into the earth. The extraction of subterranean resources extending on both sides of the boundary may become complicated and lead to conflict. In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait because it claimed that the Kuwaitis were drilling too many wells using directional drilling, thus breaking the vertical plane and extracting oil on the Iraqi side of the boundary. Other resources that are often at the center of disputes include fresh water, minerals, and fishing rights.

DIRECTIONAL DRILLING
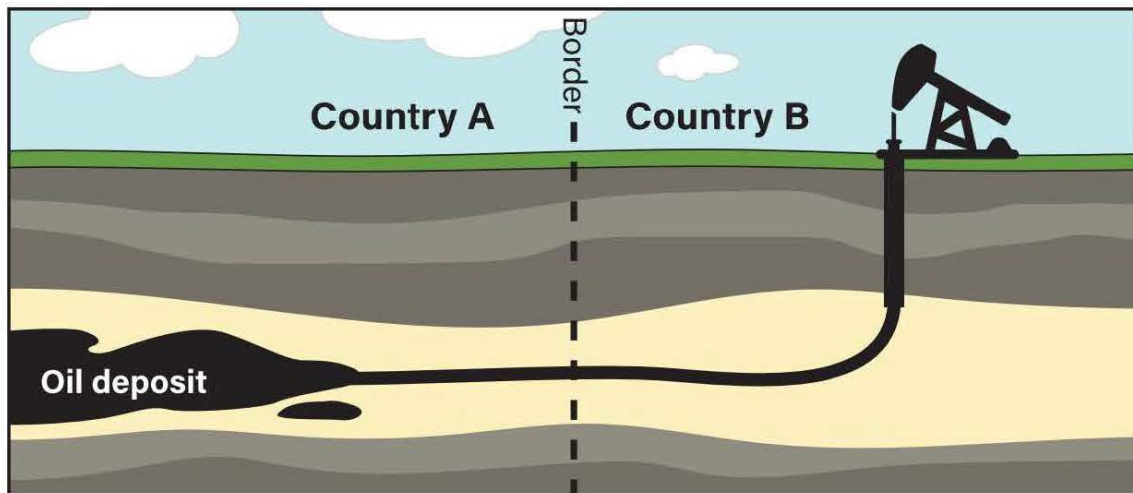
If a country uses directional drilling to access oil or gas and crosses an international border, this can lead to a resource dispute.

Demarcation and Functions of Boundaries

How a border is labeled on the physical landscape such as with a fence, wall, stones or signs is called *demarcation*. This process can indicate the type of relationship that exists between countries and be a clue to how the border functions. Many borders in the world are not demarcated at all because they are in vast wilderness areas with no one living there or the relationships between the two states is cordial, open, and peaceful. Additionally, most boundaries are not demarcated as the process tends to be protracted and expensive.

How a boundary will be maintained, how it will function, and what goods and people will be allowed to cross are important aspects of an **administered boundary**. As relations change between countries, and also between entities within a state, the means by which a boundary is demarcated and administered may change significantly. The Israeli-West Bank barrier separates Israel's claims from those of the Palestinians through a multi-layered fence system. From Israel's standpoint, it is necessary to prevent terrorism, while the Palestinians argue that it promotes racial segregation. Begun in 2000, during a period of increased tension and violence, the militarized border remains an ever-present point of contention.

Recently, because of the Syrian refugee crisis and the COVID pandemic, many of the borders between EU states have become much more restrictive and less open. Boundaries that have checkpoints where a passport or visa are required to enter the country are called **controlled boundary**. These boundaries

allow some people and goods to traverse the border while denying entry to others. In 2020, the United Kingdom left the EU (Brexit), potentially creating a more controlled border between the island state and mainland Europe.

Unique Boundaries: Exclaves and Enclaves

As a result of migration, trade deals, devolution, conflicts, and other reasons, pockets of isolated national groups sometimes find themselves separated from their homeland. **Exclaves** are territories that are part of a state, yet geographically separated from the main state by one or more countries. For example, Alaska is separated from the lower 48 United States by Canada. Nakhchivan, an autonomous republic of Azerbaijan, is separated from the main territory of Azerbaijan by Armenia.

Exclaves may help to reunite ethnic groups with the main country, but communication and transportation challenges often exist. Kaliningrad Oblast is an exclave of Russia because it is separated from the rest of the country by Lithuania and Belarus. Kaliningrad has a high percentage of Russians (over 85 percent) and is an important port for Russia.

Political enclaves are states, territories or parts of a state or territory that are completely surrounded by the territory of another state. At the national level, the sovereign states of San Marino and the Vatican City are completely engulfed by Italy making them political enclaves. Autonomy, national identity, and self-rule are often a benefit of an enclave. Challenges for enclaves often include maintaining positive relationships with the surrounding country and transportation accessibility.

LESOTHO

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Lesotho is totally surrounded by South Africa, making it a political enclave and landlocked. Describe the challenges of exclaves and enclaves.

Indian reservations within the United States may be considered enclaves as they possess tribal sovereignty and are recognized as independent nations. At the local level, informal *ethnic enclaves* (see Topic 3.2) exist in a number of cities and municipalities.

The Effects of Boundaries

A boundary is more than a line between two political entities. It has effects that stretch well beyond simple questions of space and into political, cultural, and economic regions that affect various populations in many ways.

Shatterbelts

Political boundaries often do not follow cultural and economic landscapes, which can cause a region to become a political **shatterbelt**, a place located between two very different and contentious regions. These places are under consistent stress and may suffer instability or fragmentation due to external aggression. Sometimes boundaries separate people who speak the same language, practice the same religion, or share other traits. (See Topic 4.9 for more information of Yugoslavia as a shatterbelt.)

Eastern Europe has historically been a shatterbelt between Western Europe and Russia. While Western Europe has historically been Roman Catholic or Protestant, Russia has been Orthodox. For most of the 20th century, Western Europe was generally capitalist and Russia was communist.

Another shatterbelt is the Caucasus, a mountainous region between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea that includes the states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. After the fall of the Soviet Union, many ethnically distinct territories gained autonomy. However, these independence movements were often violent, and territorial claims are still in flux in many places. Nagorno-Karabakh is a semi-autonomous region but is predominantly recognized as part of Azerbaijan. (See Topic 4.8.) Many Orthodox Christian Armenians live in the region but the surrounding land is home to mostly Muslim Azerbaijanis. After a destructive war between the two states from 1988 to 1994, disputes over sovereign territory and national rights persisted, and a new clash erupted again in 2020.

Language and Religion

As people move and boundaries change, language changes also. The language often changes because people separated by boundaries develop distinct dialects. When boundaries are placed in an attempt to unite people who have distinct dialects, the unification process proves to be difficult, as was the case with Italy. Italy did not become a unified state until the 1860s. Before unification, people spoke a variety of languages depending on where they lived. From the Alps in the north to Sicily in the south, no single language united everyone. Even after 160 years as a single state, people in Italy remain only loosely bound together.

Religion and boundaries can make for a volatile mixture. Within the boundaries of India, the majority of the people are Hindus, but a significant minority are Muslims. This division creates tension that sometimes leads to violence. However, countries such as the United States and South Korea demonstrate that people of different faiths can live in harmony.

The division of Ireland demonstrates how complicated religion and boundaries can become. In the mid-20th century, most of Ireland won its

independence from the United Kingdom and formed the Republic of Ireland, which was 95 percent Roman Catholic. However, a small area in the north, known as Northern Ireland, remained part of the United Kingdom. This area was only 35 percent Catholic and mostly Protestant.

The boundary between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland created two problems. On one hand, it divided the Catholics of both places who wanted to be together in one country. On the other hand, the boundary united Catholics and Protestants into one political entity, Northern Ireland. There, Catholic-Protestant tensions—which included economic and political conflicts as well as religious ones—led to three decades of violence starting in 1968. Before peace was restored, about 3,000 people were killed in bombings and shootings.

Ethnicity, Nationality, and Economy

Boundaries that are superimposed, or enforced by a dominant nation or ethnic group, can create conflict for nations occupying the same space. Sri Lanka, a large island off the southern tip of India, is home to two groups that see themselves as ethnically distinct from the other:

- the Sinhalese are the majority, mostly Buddhist, and live in the southern part of the country
- the Tamil are the minority, mostly Hindus, and live in the northern and eastern parts of the island

The Tamils long felt they were treated as second-class citizens by the Sinhalese. Hoping to win an independent homeland, Tamil rebels began fighting in the 1980s. They were defeated in 2009, but around 75,000 Sri Lankans had died in the fighting.

The Law of the Sea

Countries generally agree that a vertical plane extends through borders, defining space above and below the land. However, how far horizontally out into the ocean should a country's influence spread? Conflicts over the use of the ocean have been common in modern history. Only in the last half of the 20th century were water boundaries addressed systematically. Between 1973 and 1982, the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea** was signed by more than 150 countries. It defined four zones:

1. **Territorial sea:** This area extends up to 12 nautical miles of sovereignty where commercial vessels may pass, but noncommercial vessels may be challenged. A nautical mile is equal to 1.15 land-measured miles.

2. **Contiguous zone:** Coastal states have limited sovereignty for up to 24 nautical miles where they can enforce laws on customs, immigration, and sanitation.

3. **Exclusive economic zone (EEZ):** Coastal states can explore, extract minerals, and manage natural resources up to 200 nautical miles.

4. **High seas:** Water beyond any country's EEZ that is open to all states.
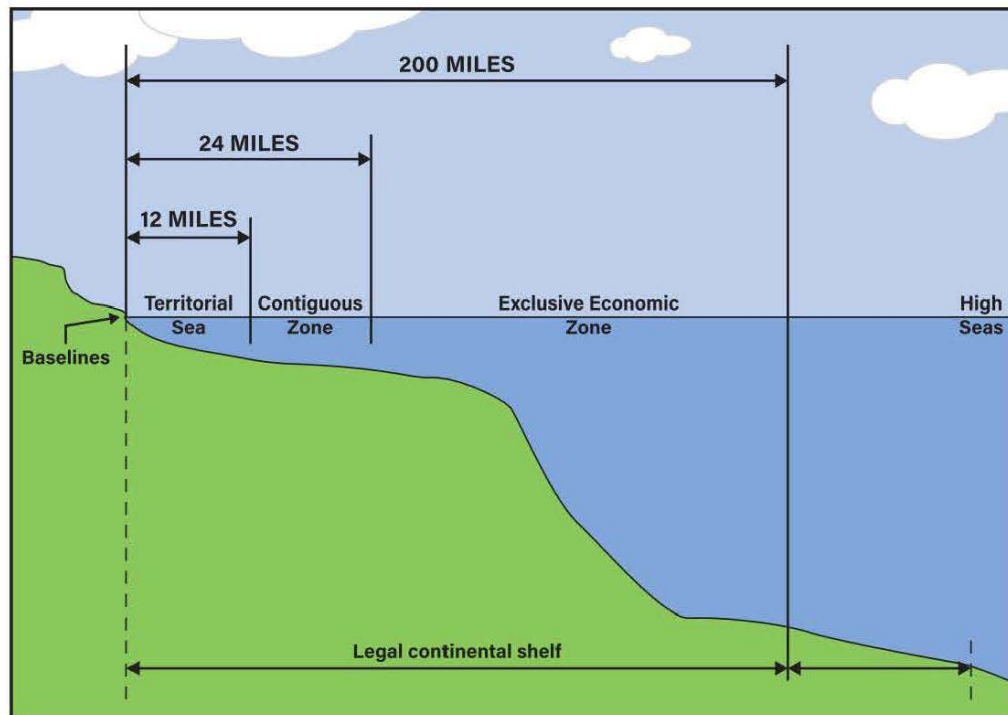
Source: United Nations

UNCLOS is an international treaty that defines the rights and responsibilities of nations related to the sea. The United States abides by the treaty but has not signed it.

If two coastal states share a waterway and are less than 24 nautical miles apart, then the distance between the two coasts is divided by half. For example, if only 20 miles of water separated two countries, then each would be entitled to 10 miles of territorial sea.

The Value of Islands States that have islands have been granted vast areas of space. For example, if a country's farthest island extends several hundred miles from the mainland, then the EEZ of that outward island extends that country's claims by another 200 miles. For example, near Alaska, where islands extend far out in the Bering Sea, the EEZ of the United States is huge. The United States' EEZ covers more area than any other country—3.4 million square miles. That is almost as much as the total land area of the United States (3.8 million square miles).

The 200-mile EEZ is very valuable economically to the many **small island developing states (SIDS)** in the world's oceans. SIDS control nearly 30 percent of all oceans and seas and their EEZs are much larger than their landmass. Tuvalu's EEZ in the South Pacific is 27,000 times the size of its land, but its EEZ contains valuable minerals, natural gas and fishing stocks, and the prospect of tourism. These new economic opportunities based on the ocean for SIDS have been given the term *blue economy*.

Artic Opportunities The Arctic Ocean is a region where challenges are being made related to land, deep water natural resources, and sea passages for ships. As the ice in the Arctic Ocean melts, countries in the region such as

Russia, Canada, the United States, Norway, and Denmark see new economic opportunities in the region.

South China Sea In 2011, a territorial dispute in the South China Sea emerged related to the Spratly Islands, a series of small islands and coral reefs. The region is a rich fishing ground, important trade route, and a source of potential natural gas and oil reserves. China, Vietnam, and other neighboring countries are in the midst of a tension-filled dispute. China has made claims to large parts of the sea and has built artificial islands on the reef to solidify its territorial claims and expand its 200-mile EEZ.

Challenging a Zone Disputes over territorial control in coastal waters can turn violent. In 1973, Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi extended his 12-mile territorial sea to include the entire Gulf of Sidra. He created a "line of death" that was not to be crossed. U.S. leaders considered the line a violation of the Law of the Sea, and U.S. Navy ships challenged the line by sailing through the gulf. In August 1981, while flying inside the line of death but outside the 12-mile limit, U.S. F-14 fighter jets engaged and shot down two Libyan fighter jets. Similar incidents between the United States and Libya occurred in 1986 and 1989.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the nature and function of international boundaries?*

Type of Boundary	Function of Boundary

KEY TERMS

defined boundary

delimited boundary

demarcated boundary

definitional boundary dispute

locational boundary disputes
  (territorial disputes)

irredentism

operational boundary dispute
  (functional dispute)

allocational boundary dispute
  (resource dispute)

administered boundary

controlled borders

exclaves

political enclaves

shatterbelt

United Nations Convention
  on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

territorial sea

contiguous zone

exclusive economic zone (EEZ)

high seas

small island developing
  state (SIDS)

Internal Boundaries

Essential Question: What are the nature and function of internal boundaries?

International boundaries create borders between countries, but **internal boundaries** are used at the subnational scale to divide countries into smaller units. These units, such as states, counties, cities, and local districts, break up territory into more manageable units of governance. Internal boundaries fall within the jurisdiction of the government, and therefore state and local governments can change these boundaries as needed.

Types of Internal Boundary Spaces

Some subdivisions, such as states, serve multiple purposes such as maintaining roads and operating hospitals. Others, such as park districts, are specialized. In the United States, these subdivisions are part of *federalism*, the sharing of power between the national and local governments. That's why some laws and policies apply to just a local area and others apply throughout the country.

Electoral Geography

Using spatial thinking techniques and tools to analyze elections and voting patterns is called **electoral geography**. Internal boundaries that divide a country's electorate into subnational regions are called **voting districts** and exist at multiple scales. People of a country who are eligible to vote, known as the **electorate,** vote for leaders in each district to govern on their behalf.

In the United States, the Constitution requires the federal government to take a **census**, a count of the population, every 10 years, to ensure the national congressional districts have approximately the same number of people. After the results of the census have been calculated, the national government determines each state's number of representatives in the House of Representatives through **reapportionment**, changing the number of representatives granted to each state so it reflects the state's population. State legislatures or state committees then redraw district boundaries so that each district contains roughly the same number of people. This process is known as **redistricting**.

The total number of representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives has been fixed at 435 since 1912. Regardless of reapportionment results, each state is guaranteed at least one representative in the House, along with its two members in the Senate. As people in the United States have moved south and west, states in these regions have gained representation and states in the Midwest and Northeast have lost seats in Congress.

Gerrymandering

Some states try to create districts that are contiguous (connected), and compact, and based on existing city and county boundaries. Traditionally, though, political maneuvering shapes redistricting. **Gerrymandering** is the drawing of boundaries for political districts by the party in power to protect or increase its power. The term is derived in part from Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry (1744–1814). He influenced the drawing of districts in Massachusetts to benefit his own political party. A newspaper editor noted that an oddly shaped district resembled a salamander and coined the term *gerrymander*.

North Carolina's "I-85 District"
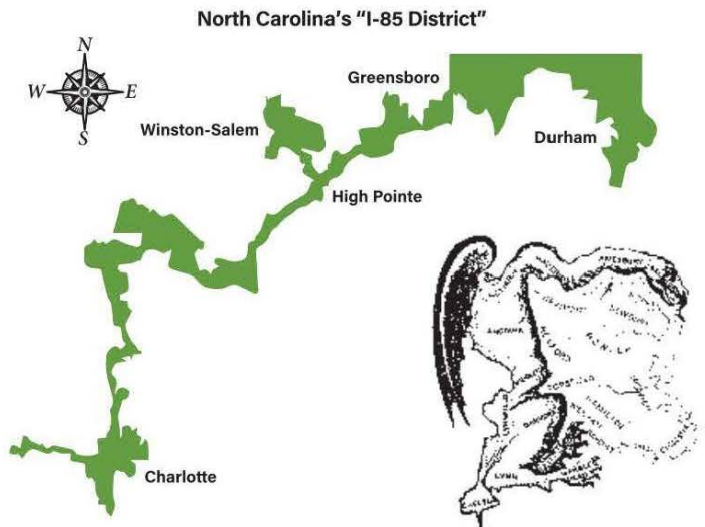
Source: Wikimedia Commons

In 2011, North Carolina District 12 was redrawn to follow the I-85 corridor which gave an advantage to the party in power. The redrawn district was compared to the Massachusetts redistricting (shown in the cartoon inset) supported by governor Elbridge Gerry in 1812.

Results of Gerrymandering By carefully drawing district boundaries, politicians can create "safe seats" that are highly likely to elect members of their own party. As a result, most races in legislative districts are not competitive. Further, gerrymandering can enable one party that regularly loses statewide elections for president, sentor, and governor to still win a solid majority of the district-wide races for the state legislature and Congress. They can do this using the techniques shown in the chart below.
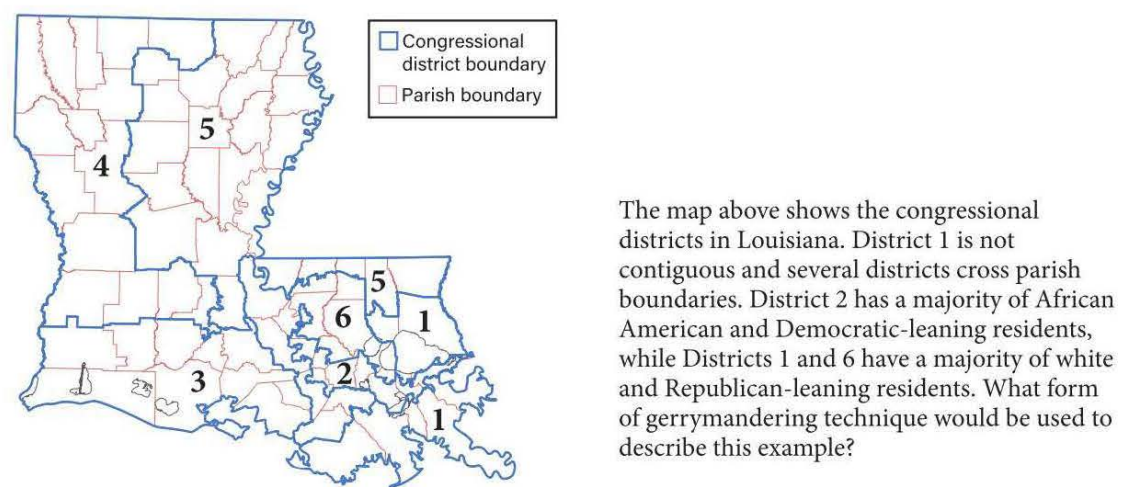
TYPES OF GERRYMANDERING	
Type	**Definition**
Cracking	Dispersing a group into several districts to prevent a majority
Packing	Combining like-minded voters into one district to prevent them from affecting elections in other districts
Stacking	Diluting a minority-populated district with majority populations
Hijacking	Redrawing two districts in order to force two elected representatives of the same party to run against each other
Kidnapping	Moving an area where an elected representative has support to an area where he or she does not have support

Discrimination Gerrymandering has often been used to reduce representation of African Americans and other minorities in government. The 1965 Voting Rights Act attempted to end these discriminatory practices. As a result, minority representation in Congress increased. In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that the law had succeeded in remedying the racial disparity in representation so key provisions of the act were no longer needed.

Alternatives To prevent gerrymandering, some states have adopted procedures to make redistricting less partisan. Some states use bipartisan committees with equal members of each party, plus independents to draw the boundaries. For example, in 1980, Iowa created a nonpartisan agency to redraw congressional and legislative voting districts after each U.S. census.

LOUISIANA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS, 2018

☐ Congressional district boundary
☐ Parish boundary

The map above shows the congressional districts in Louisiana. District 1 is not contiguous and several districts cross parish boundaries. District 2 has a majority of African American and Democratic-leaning residents, while Districts 1 and 6 have a majority of white and Republican-leaning residents. What form of gerrymandering technique would be used to describe this example?

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are the nature and function of internal boundaries?*

Concepts That Influence Internal Boundaries	Effects of Concepts

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KEY TERMS

internal boundaries	reapportionment	packing
electoral geography	redistricting	stacking
voting districts	gerrymandering	hijacking
electorate	cracking	kidnapping
census		

Forms of Governance

Essential Question: What are federal and unitary states, and how do they affect spatial organization?

Governments attempt to unify the people under their jurisdiction by defining the country's boundaries, exerting control over the territory, and blending the nationalites within those boundaries. The structure of the national government and its internal political geography can impact state unity.

Different Forms of Governance

Countries are governed on more than one level. But different forms of governance allocate power in different ways, affecting how much authority is available at both the national and local levels.

Federal and Unitary States

Two main types of political spatial organizations are federal and unitary systems of governance. Both systems administer the day-to-day operations of governance with sovereignty, and the national government is the final authority. A **federal state** unites separate political entities into an overarching system that allows each entity to maintain some degree of sovereignty. This power sharing is vertical with the different functions and responsibilities of government found at the national, provincial/state, and local level. Examples of federal states include Germany, the United States, and Nigeria.

In contrast, in a **unitary state**, most or all of the governing power is held by the national government. All local governments in a unitary system are subject to the authority of the national government. Countries with unitary systems of government include France, Japan, and Kenya. The differences between federal and unitary states are outlined in the chart on the following page.

Local Powers Vary by Government Type

In both federal and unitary states, local divisions of governance have some degree of power. But the amount of that power depends on the level of power exercised by the national government. Large landmass countries—such as the United States, Canada, and Russia—tend to be federal states. In contrast, smaller landmass countries—such as Japan, Egypt, and Spain—tend to be unitary states. These patterns have exceptions. China is a large country with a unitary and very centralized government. Belgium is a small country that is a federal state, which reflects the ethnic divide between its Walloon and Flemish citizens.

States that use federal governance often do so to placate various cultural groups. Allowing local governments to manage their own affairs, such as education, promotes peace. Nigeria is an example of how this works, depending on the mixture of religious faiths of the people of each province:

- Provinces in northern Nigeria, where Islam is common or dominant, have enacted some or all of sharia, the Islamic legal framework.
- Provinces in the southern Nigeria, where Christianity or traditional religious practices are more common, do not use sharia.

Unitary states have strong centralized governments that control almost all matters of governance. Provincial and local governments, in most cases, are simply extensions of the national government. Unitary states can be either non-democratic—such as China and Saudi Arabia—or fairly democratic—such as France and Indonesia.

FEDERAL VS. UNITARY STATES		
Trait	**Federal**	**Unitary**
Authority of the Government	Shared between the central government and provincial, state, and local governments	Held primarily by the central government with very little power given to local governments
Hierarchy of Power	Multiple levels of power diffused throughout federal, state, and local governments	No hierarchy of sovereign powers
Type of Country Where Commonly Used	Multiple ethnic groups with significant minority populations	Few cultural differences and small minority populations
Strengths	• Often represents needs of local and regional areas, not just national issues • Can be quicker to address and more representative of local and regional issues • Power is spread across the country, not consolidated in the core area	• One set of laws and policies • Clarity of national policies to other governments and the people • Can be cheaper to run since there is only one level of government
Weaknesses	• Contradictory laws can exist between levels of government • Often slower and more difficult to gain consensus and respond to national issues	• Laws and policies often overlook minority, local, regional, or periphery issues • Power and benefits are often concentrated in core areas of a country

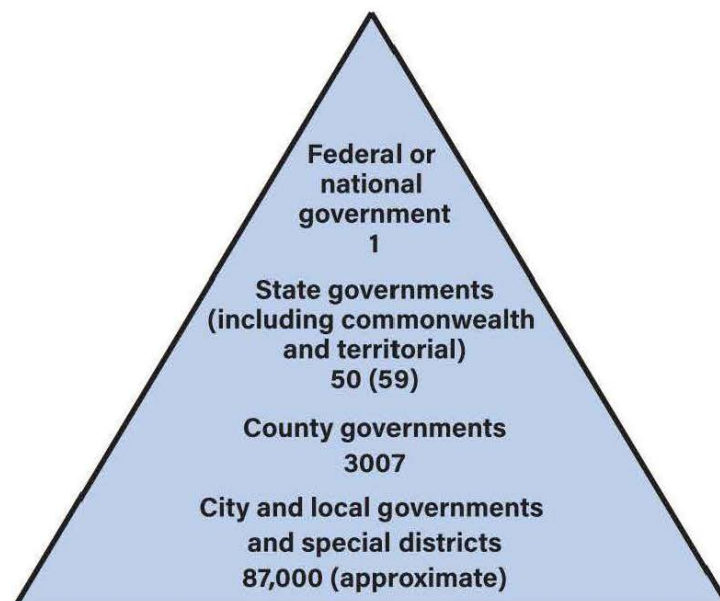| Type of System	
	Federal
	Unitary
	Other
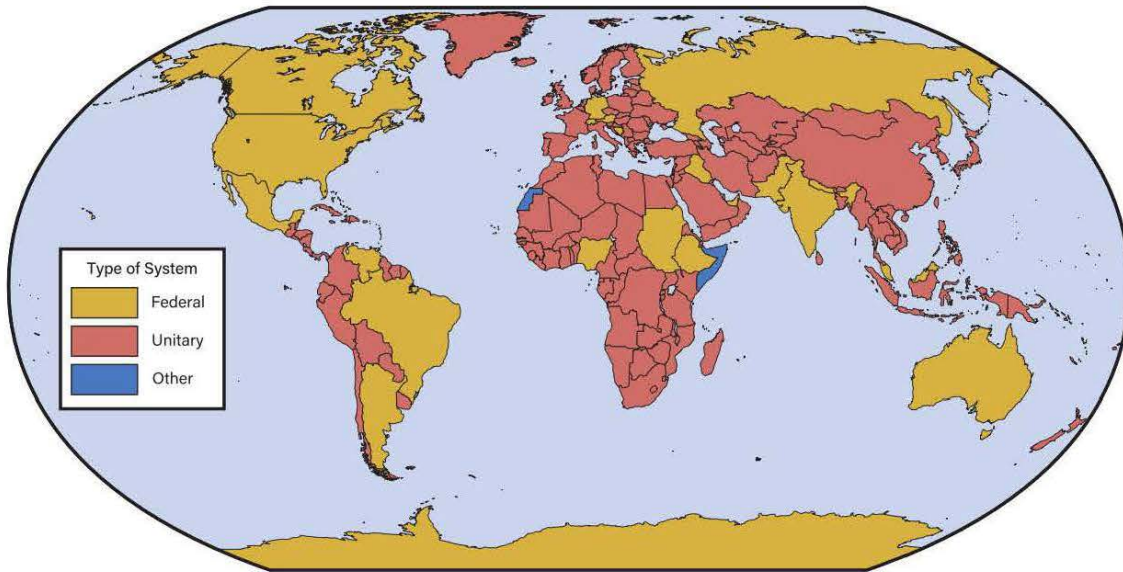
Patterns of Local and Metropolitan Governance

Local and metropolitan forms of governance, such as municipalities and regional planning commissions, are subnational political units that have varying degrees of local control.

Most people in the world are under the rule of overlapping levels of government. The U.S. government is a hierarchy with the federal government at the top and many local and special purpose districts at the bottom. Special purpose districts include transportation, fire, police, library, water, and school districts, to name a few. Each level of government has authority in distinct areas but some of the powers are shared.

LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Federal or
national
government
1

State governments
(including commonwealth
and territorial)
50 (59)

County governments
3007

City and local governments
and special districts
87,000 (approximate)

The number of units of government changes from year to year. One way this happens is that a city will add outlying territory to its domain to increase its individual and commercial tax bases. **Annexation** is the process of legally adding territory to a city. However, residents of a new residential development on what had been farmland might prefer to create their own town rather than being annexed by an existing city. This leads to a new city government—and increased competition for services, business, and taxes.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What are federal and unitary states and how do they affect spatial organization?*

Effects of Federal States on Spatial Organization	Effects of Unitary States on Spatial Organization

KEY TERMS

federal state	unitary state	annexation

GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES: *UNITS OF GOVERNMENT*

Geographers study how political power is distributed across space at different scales:

- At the global scale, power is distributed among countries.
- At the national scale, power is distributed among units such as provinces or states.
- At the local scale, power can be distributed among several types of units: counties, cities, school districts, and others.

Diverse Local Districts

Some local districts have very specialized functions. They might fund fire protection or a public library. Illinois includes several mosquito abatement districts. The Des Plaines Valley Mosquito Abatement District includes 77 square miles in the western suburbs of Chicago. It has about five full-time employees and hires another two dozen or so workers seasonally.

Mosquito abatement districts are one reason that Illinois leads all other states in the number of units of local government. In 2017, Illinois had 6,918 units of government. A typical resident lived with six or more layers of local government. In second place was Texas with 5,343 units. However, the population of Texas was more than double that of Illinois.

How to Distribute Power

Mosquito abatement districts highlight the issue of the best way to distribute power spatially. Many problems, such as mosquitoes and the diseases they spread, drug trafficking, and pollution, pay no attention to political boundaries. One response to these types of problems is to create special districts to address them. Another is to build cooperation among existing units of government. A third is to refer the problem to a higher level of government such as a state or national agency. Deciding where to locate the power to respond to these problems is a constant issue for debate.

1. Identify an entity that has power at each scale: global, national and local.

2. Explain why special districts are often used at the local scale.

THINK AS A GEOGRAPHER: *DEMARCATION AND FUNCTION OF BORDERS*

How a border is demarcated or marked indicates a great deal about the relationships that exist between states or regions. For each image, use clues from the image and background information to answer the following questions:

Top: Utah-Wyoming border, Left: Israel-Palestine border, Right: United States-Canada border
Source: Wikimedia Commons

1. Identify each border as controlled, open, or militarized.

2. Describe what the border's demarcation shows about the relationships between the political entities in each image.

3. Explain the purpose of controlling a country's border.

CHAPTER 9 REVIEW:
Political Boundaries and Forms of Governance

Topics 4.4–4.7

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

**Question 1 refers to the following photograph.**

1. Which type of boundary is most clearly shown in the image above?
   (A) Defined
   (B) Delimited
   (C) Natural
   (D) Open
   (E) Demarcated

2. When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, it said it wanted to reunite the German minority living in Poland with Germany. This is an example of
   (A) nationalism
   (B) irredentism
   (C) supranationalism
   (D) an allocational dispute
   (E) an operational dispute

Question 3 refers to the following map.

THE U.S.-CANADA BOUNDARY
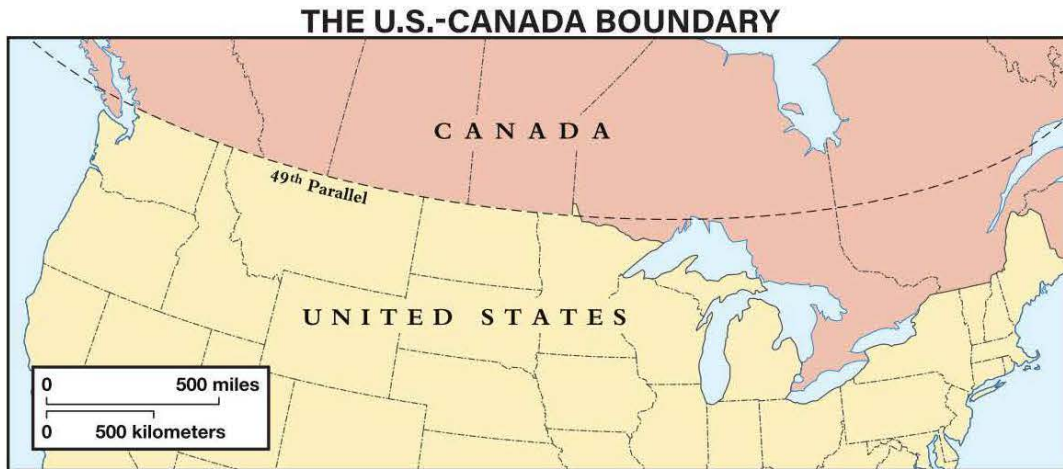
3. The 49th parallel between the United States and Canada is
   (A) a relic boundary
   (B) a superimposed boundary
   (C) an antecedent boundary
   (D) a subsequent/ethnographic boundary
   (E) an open boundary

Question 4 refers to the map on page 233 and the chart below. The voter index indicates how strongly a district leans toward a party.

PARTY LEANINGS IN LOUISIANA DISTRICTS	
Congressional District	**Voter Index**
1	Republican, +24
2	Democrat, +25
3	Republican, +20
4	Republican, +13
5	Republican, +15
6	Republican, +19

4. Which gerrymandering strategies do Districts 1 and 2 best show?
   (A) Stacking
   (B) Packing
   (C) Hijacking
   (D) Kidnapping
   (E) Scaling

5. Uruguay's national government sets policies that are administered by local governments. This system of government is best described as

(A) federal

(B) unitary

(C) reapportioned

(D) communist

(E) compact

6. The formation of India and Pakistan in 1947 led to a new boundary between the two states. This boundary is best described as

(A) an antecedent boundary because the two countries fought over scarce water resources

(B) a controlled boundary because the border was placed by a foreign power without negotiation

(C) an open boundary because it was unguarded and could be easily traversed

(D) a consequent boundary because the border was made along an already-existing cultural division

(E) a relic boundary because it no longer exists but was still visible on the landscape

7. The Syrian Civil War erupted in 2011 and forced millions of refugees to flee into Turkey. The Turkish government was sympathetic to the refugees but became concerned about how many Syrians were crossing Turkey's border. Which type of border dispute describes this scenario?

(A) Definitional

(B) Locational

(C) Allocational
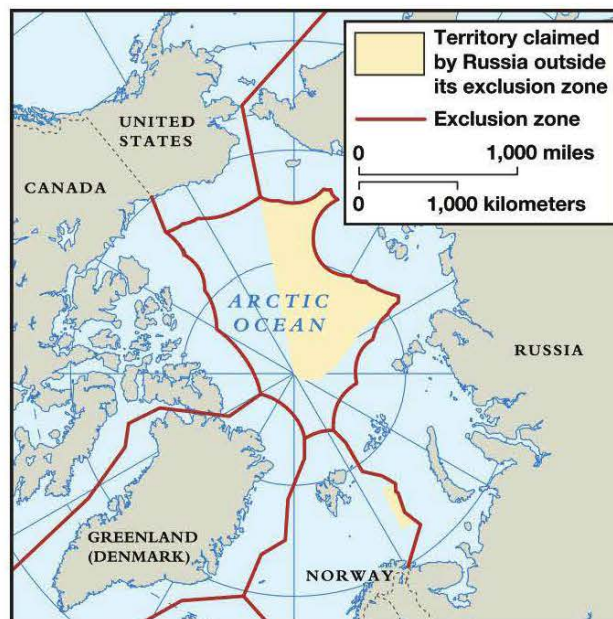
(D) Operational

(E) Territorial

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION

1. Boundaries serve a variety of purposes and exist at the international, national and local scale. Territoriality is the willingness of a person, group, or country to defend their claimed space. Often claims of space can cause disagreements or even conflict. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) defines the rights and responsibilities of nations. Use the two maps on the next page to answer the questions that follow.

LAND CLAIMS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

Legend:
- China
- Malaysia
- Vietnam
- Brunei
- Philippines

LAND CLAIMS IN THE ARCTIC OCEAN

Legend:
- Territory claimed by Russia outside its exclusion zone
- Exclusion zone

(A) Define the concept of Territorial Seas as used in UNCLOS.

(B) Describe what activities can occur in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as used in UNCLOS.

(C) Using one of the maps, identify TWO countries that have competing claims in the Arctic or South China Sea.

(D) Describe TWO economic reasons that explain the importance of the claims in the South China Sea or Arctic Ocean.

(E) Describe ONE environmental concern affecting the oceans.

(F) Describe ONE economic or environmental benefit of the Arctic Ocean for any country not shown on the map.

(G) Briefly explain why choke points are politically or economically important.

CHAPTER 10

Challenges in the Modern State

Topics 4.8–4.10

Topic 4.8 Defining Devolutionary Factors

Learning Objective: Define factors that lead to the devolution of states. (SPS-4.A)

Topic 4.9 Challenges to Sovereignty

Learning Objective: Explain how political, economic, cultural, and technological changes challenge state sovereignty. (SPS-4.B)

Topic 4.10 Consequences of Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces

Learning Objective: Explain how the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces apply at the state scale. (SPS-4.C)

Geography cannot solve all of the world's problems; but no problem can be solved without geography.

—Dr. Joseph Manzo, Professor of Geography, Concord University

Source: Wikimedia Commons

The Arab Spring was a series of democratic protests seeking government reform in 2011. The photo shows protests in Yemen. (See Topic 4.9 for challenges to sovereignty.)

Defining Devolutionary Factors

Essential Question: What factors lead to the devolution of states?

Modern states and the political map of the world are dynamic and can change over time and space. Numerous factors influence the changing nature and relationships both among and within states. Independence movements, civil wars, colonialism, economic development, physical isolation, ethnicity, and lack of representation can all put pressure on national and international relationships.

Governments and other political entities, such as the United Nations, often responds to tensions in order to maintain peace and order. These tensions can result in changes in borders, power, and governments, or even the creation of new countries. Geographers study these forces and the changes that result on global, national, and subnational levels.

Forces Leading to Devolution

Within a country, groups or regions can feel disconnected and disempowered, leading to a lack of national pride. In these cases, groups often feel that local or regional issues are being ignored by the central government, causing anger and distrust toward the government to arise. If the feelings are strong and sustained, demands for changes in the political system can increase. This tension can lead to demands from the poplulation ranging from more control in political affairs to complete separation.

One response that countries will use to keep a country united but still grant some powers is the process of **devolution**, the transfer of some political power from the central government to subnational levels of government. The powers within a government—administrative, judicial, and legislative—are divided among the national government and subnational levels. This division varies among countries and is influenced by whether the state has a unitary or federal system. (See Topic 4.7.) Federalism by its nature is an example of devolution because provinces and states have power. Forces that lead to or accelerate devolution within a country are physical geography, ethno-linguistic divisions, terrorism, economic factors, and social conditions.

Physical Geography

While globalization and improved technology promote connections, the physical geography of a region can cause isolation, decrease connections, and increase the likelihood of devolution. Many states that are very large in size (Russia, India, the United States) or those that are made up of thousands of

islands (Indonesia and the Philippines) can face challenges of communication and connectivity within their borders. Other physical features that have reduced contact among groups of people include deserts, plateaus, mountain ranges, and large bodies of water. These challenges can be overcome but as distance from the political power center increases, identification with and trust in the government can often decrease.

The Kashmir region of northern India and northern Pakistan has been and still is a region of conflict and border disputes. The Pir Panjal and Himalayan mountain ranges cause isolation among people in these regions. Areas claimed by India, China, and Pakistan have had some local autonomy because of the geographical isolation caused by these mountain ranges. Each country is unwilling to release its claims on the Kashmir because of the wealth of fresh water and natural resources in the region.

Ethnic Separatism

Many ethnic separatist movements throughout the world take place within specific regional lines within states. **Ethnic separatism** is the advocacy of full political separation (or secession) from the larger group along cultural, ethnic, tribal, or governmental lines. Ethnic groups and minorities are often concentrated in specific regions, which can lead to independence movements. In order to maintain unity, the central government will often grant more authority to these ethnic regions via devolution.

For example, Spain has two culturally and linguistically distinct groups within its border, the Basques and Catalans, in addition to the Spanish. The Basque Country was granted semiautonomy in 1979 by the Spanish government. Groups in Catalan are still seeking separation on the grounds of cultural differences and lack of power in the Spanish government. However, the intensity of their separatism is tied to actions by the central government of Spain. For example, if the national government imposes more restrictions throughout the country, then the Basques and Catalans may intensify their desire for independence. If the national government allows more local autonomy, it hopes that the desire for independence will decrease.

ETHNIC SEPARATISM IN SPAIN
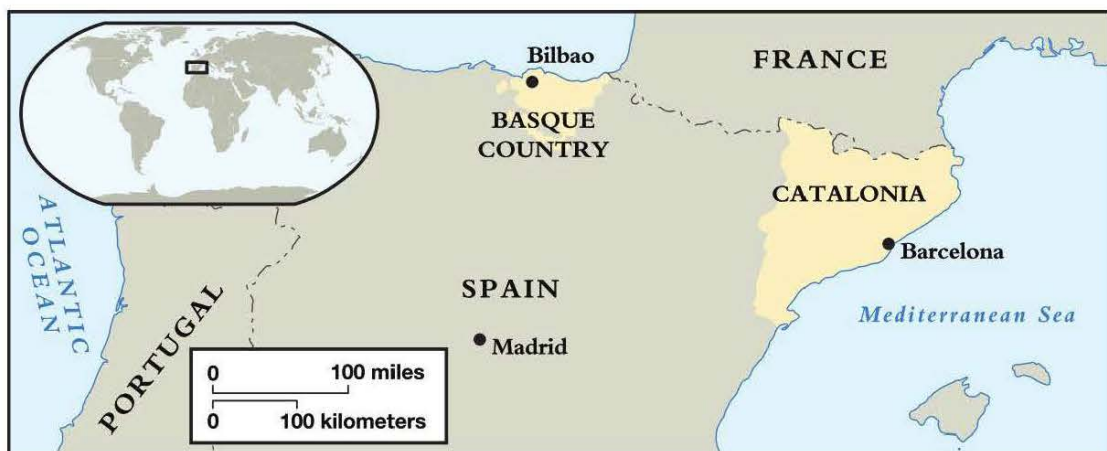
Groups in both the Basque Country and Catalonia are examples of ethnic separatism. Although the processes for these groups has been different, each sought separation from Spain.

Ethnic Cleansing

Ethnic groups may seek separatism because of how they are treated within a country. Certain ethnic groups may be persecuted or not have equal status from the government. In extreme cases, acts of genocide and/or ethnic cleansing attempt to eliminate a group of people from a country. The United Nations Commission of Experts described **ethnic cleansing** as "a purposeful policy designed by one ethnic or religious group to remove by violent or terror-inspiring means the civilian population of another ethnic or religious group from certain geographic areas." Coercive tactics that have been used in ethnic cleansing include destruction of property, attacks on civilians, arbitrary arrest, rape, torture, and murder.

The concept is grounded in the desire to create an ethnically homogeneous nation-state. The term arose out of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Examples from earlier in history include European colonists in North America who killed or drove away Native Americans, Hitler's attempt to eliminate all Jews from Germany, and Poles who forced Germans to leave Poland after World War II. More recent examples have been carried out by Russians against the Chechens in the Caucasus Mountains, Indonesians against the people of East Timor, and the Sudanese against people in Darfur, In each of these, hundreds of thousands of people were killed or forced to flee their homes.

Terrorism

Terrorism is organized violence aimed at government and civilian targets to create fear for the advancement of political goals. It is most commonly used by non-governmental groups that do not have an army.

Ethnic separatists sometimes employ terrorist tactics in hopes of achieving devolution. Since its inception in 1959, the Basque nationalist/separatist group Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) has fought for independence from Spain. Increased frustration spurred ETA to wage a campaign of violence beginning in 1968. After more than 820 deaths, ETA declared a permanent cessation of armed activities in 2011. However, ETA continued to seek independence of the Basque region from Spain.

On a global scale, terrorism often has its roots in specific regions or countries. Terrorist groups seeking power and recognition within a country can expand their operations across international borders and even on a global scale. Al Qaeda has its roots among Sunni Muslims fighting against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. However, in 1996, Al Qaeda directed its aggression toward the United States to protest U.S. support of Saudi Arabia and Israel. A series of attacks in eastern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula in the 1990s culminated in the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

Economics

Control of natural resources, such as mineral deposits, can prompt regions of countries to advocate for devolution. People in one region might want to use locally produced wealth for local benefits, such as better schools, infrastructure, and healthcare—or simply to lower taxes. The central government might argue that these resources should benefit the entire country.

Many tribal groups in the Amazon River basin of Brazil object to the extraction of resources and the development of the rainforest without local communities benefiting and being a part of the decision-making process. In Scotland, revenues from North Sea oil helped fuel talk of independence from the United Kingdom. In 2014, Scotland narrowly voted to remain part of the United Kingdom.

Social Issues

Social devolution often follows geographic divisions between religious, linguistic, and historical regions. Countries experiencing social devolution usually have concentrated pockets of a specific religion or distinct spoken language by the local inhabitants. Federal systems, as in the United States and Canada, allow local governments to maintain their distinct languages and religions.

The situation in Belgium, in northwestern Europe, is quite different. As the bilingual sign below reflects, the country is split into the Flemish-speaking north, called Flanders, and the French-speaking south, called Wallonia. As a result of linguistic, cultural, and economic differences, the country is sharply divided. Each region has its own institutions and many people identify themselves as Flemish or Walloon rather than Belgian. The future of Belgium as a single country is in doubt.

A bilingual sign showing direction to a police station in Belgium. It uses both the French term, *police*, and the Flemish term, *politie.*

Irredentism

As mentioned in Topic 4.5, **irredentism** is a movement to unite people who share a language or other cultural elements but are divided by a national boundary. One example of irredentism comes from the Caucasus Mountains region. Under the Soviet Union, Nagorno-Karabakh was an Armenian-majority region within Azerbaijan. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh demanded that they be allowed to join the country of Armenia, which supported their demands. Azerbaijan refused, and war broke out. It is estimated that 30,000 people died before a cease-fire in 1994. In theory, a new state was created, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. In practice, the new state became part of the country of Armenia. In the fall of 2020, the conflict reignited, and as a result, Armenia will return the territories to Azerbaijan that it occupied after the 1994 cease-fire.

NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION

The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is a territorial and cultural dispute. Armenia is mostly Christian and Azebaijan is mostly Muslim. Describe challenges drawing borders based on culture.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What factors lead to the devolution of states?*

Factor	Impact on Devolution

KEY TERMS

devolution	terrorism
ethnic separatism	irredentism
ethnic cleansing	

Challenges to Sovereignty

Essential Question: How do political, economic, cultural, and technological changes challenge state sovereignty?

Major events in history have dramatically changed the world political map and countries face challenges to their sovereignty, and sometimes their very existence. Since 1960, 104 countries have been born. During the 1960s, many of the new countries were in Africa and most had been former European colonies. During the 1990s, numerous countries were created, most as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Between 2000 and 2020, five more countries were created, including Southern Sudan in 2011.

Devolution and Fragmentation

As previously stated, devolution is the transfer of power from the central government to lower levels of government. However, devolved powers can lead to regional autonomy and increased desire for independence, causing fragmentatioin of the state. When this fragmentation occurs, the state fractures along regional lines.

Autonomous Regions

Autonomous regions have their own local and legislative bodies to govern a region with a population that is an ethnic minority within the entire country. Though these regions handle their own day-to-day governance, they are not fully independent from the state in which they are located. Many of these regions, such as the Navajo Nation in the United States, reflect the heritage of an indigenous population. Some, such as the Jewish Autonomous Oblast in far eastern Russia, are based on religion. Jews began settling in the area in the 1920s. Both federal states, such as India, and unitary states, such as China, include autonomous regions.

Subnationalism

People in autonomous regions usually have a great deal of local power but give their primary allegiance to the national state. In contrast, **subnationalism** describes people who have a primary allegiance to a traditional group or ethnicity. Many French-speaking people in the province of Quebec, Canada, are subnationalists. They feel a stronger loyalty to Quebec than to Canada. In 1995, advocates of independence for Quebec narrowly lost a popular vote on the issue. Quebec remained part of Canada. In Nigeria, each of the country's

36 states chooses its own legal system. The 12 northern states of Nigeria, where Islam is the predominant religion, have sharia (legal systems based on traditional Islamic laws). The 24 southern states, where Christianity and animism are more common, use more secular legal systems. Sharia in the north is applied only to Muslims, not Christians or animists.

Many countries include several subnational groups as a result of wars, shifting borders, and movement of people. The concept of subnationalism can evolve into a stateless nation (see Topic 4.1) if the group seeks to separate and create an independent country. These groups have had various types of goals:

- Equality: In France, citizens of North African ancestry have fought for changes in laws that they argue discriminate against them.

- Independence: In far western China, some members of the Uyghur ethnic group have advocated seceding from China to form a new country, East Turkestan.

- Changing countries: In eastern Ukraine, many Russian-speaking citizens felt closer ties to Russia than to the rest of Ukraine. Russia invaded and claimed control of this region in 2014 based on irredentism. Several thousand people died in the fighting. Additionally, Crimea, a part of Ukraine, was invaded and annexed by Russia. Ukraine and NATO did not recognize the annexation. (See Topics 4.2 and 4.3 for more on Crimea.)

PRO-RUSSIAN UNREST IN UKRAINE, 2014

Source: Wikimedia Commons

The southern and eastern portions of Ukraine are where the conflicts occurred. Explain the importance of Crimea to Russia.

Numerous other groups have fought for independence and caused the fragmentation or disintegration of a country. Timor is an island on the eastern end of Indonesia, a predominately Islamic country. The eastern end of the island was settled by the Portuguese, and today is nearly 100 percent Roman Catholic. Timor-Leste (East Timor) won its independence from Indonesia in a

brief war in 2002. East Timor has rich oil reserves off of its coast and recently applied to join ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Balkanization

Sometimes an entire country or region explodes in ethnic conflict, as the Balkan Mountains region in southeastern Europe did in the early 1900s and again in the 1990s. The rugged mountains of the area made communication difficult, so the region developed a high density of distinct cultural groups—Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Bulgars, Romanians, and others. In the early 1900s, several of these groups demanded independence from the Austrian and Ottoman empires that controlled the region.

In 1918, several of these Balkan ethnic groups that felt threatened by the Communist victory in the Russia Revolution joined together to form Yugoslavia. However, when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, tensions and ethnic cleansing once again fractured the region into multiple countries. Today, **balkanization** means the fragmentation of a state or region into smaller, often hostile, units along ethno-linguistic lines. Areas that suffer from balkanization are also known as *shatterbelts*. (See Topic 4.5.)

BALKANIZATION OF YUGOSLAVIA

Other regions have suffered from balkanization. The country of Sudan was one of the largest countries in Africa when it gained its independence in 1956 from Britain and Egypt. Sudan has a history of numerous civil wars and strife. The southern regions of Sudan are non-Arab, Christian, and animist, while the north is Arab and Muslim. People of the southern regions felt persecuted and marginalized by those in the north. After a long and bloody civil war, with approximately 1.5 million deaths, the country of Southern Sudan was granted independence in 2011. Southern Sudan is very culturally diverse and is experiencing increasing internal disputes recently.

In 1962, after 30 years of internal conflict, Ethiopia annexed the coastal country of Eritrea to gain access to the Red Sea. In 1993, Eritrea declared its independence from Ethiopia and in 2000 the two countries signed a peace agreement to resolve boundary issues over land claimed by both countries. Eritrea claims separate nationality based on ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences. Both countries signed a formal peace agreement in 2018 that ended the hostilities. In December 2020, the northern province of Ethiopia, Tigray, erupted into conflict and attempted to gain independence which further destabilized the region and country.

Globalization Challenges State Sovereignty

The world is full of networks in transportation, communication, trade, social media, beliefs and values, and politics. **Globalization** is the integration of markets, states, communication, and trade on a worldwide scale. While these forces have brought people and systems closer, they have also put a strain on the sovereignty of states. This in turn has led to a race to create special alliances. Globalization has created the necessity for alliances for collective benefits on a worldwide and regional scale. In addition, economic networks between consumers and producers have changed dramatically as a result of globalization.

The sovereignty of states in the modern age of globalization has been challenged in many ways. Political borders have become less significant as ideas flow more rapidly among most countries, trade in goods is freer than in the past, and even people can travel easily in areas such as Europe. However, the challenges of COVID-19 forced many countries to reassert their control of borders and close country borders and limit in-person interactions in order to slow the spread of the disease. The state system has attempted to adapt to these changes, but the speed at which these changes occur often outpaces states' attempts to keep up. Similarly, social, economic, and environmental forces have had difficulty in maintaining pace with the forces of globalization.

The Arab Spring, a movement of pro-democracy demonstrations and rebellions that began in late 2010, provides a good example of how rapidly ideas can spread. It began with antigovernment demonstrations in Tunisia. But, aided by social media, protests spread quickly throughout North Africa and the Middle East, leading to turmoil throughout the region. The Black Lives Matter movement that started in the United States also spread in 2020 via social and mass media, with protests across the world demanding equality and changes in government and police policies.

Supranationalism

At times, countries sacrifice a degree of sovereignty by joining with other countries for a shared goal. The practice of multiple countries forming an organization for the benenfit of all members is **supranationalism**. These organizations are often formed to create a military alliance, promote trade, or combat an environmental problem. Among the first modern supranational

organizations was the League of Nations, founded after World War I. Without the United States as a member, and without strong support from other large countries, the League failed. However, it provided the inspiration for a more effective organization, the United Nations, founded after World War II.

SUPRANATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS			
Organization	**Members States**	**Mission**	**Headquarters**
United Nations (UN), 1945	193: most countries of the world and two others as non-member observer states	To promote peace, security and human rights	▪ New York City
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 1949	30: United States, Canada, Iceland, most countries in western and central Europe, and Turkey	To provide mutual defense of member states	▪ Brussels, Belgium
European Union (EU), 1993	27: mostly countries in western and central Europe	To integrate member states politically and economically	▪ Brussels, Belgium
United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), 2020 formerly NAFTA (1994–2019)	3: United States, Mexico, and Canada	To stimulate free trade among members	▪ Washington, DC ▪ Mexico City ▪ Ottawa, Canada
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 1967	10: countries from SE Asia	To advance economic growth, peace, social progress, and cultural and economic development in the region	▪ Jakarta, Indonesia
Arctic Council, 1996	8: only countries with territory in the Arctic—Canada, Russia, the United States, and countries of northern Europe	To foster cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the Arctic states with participation of Arctic indigenous communities	▪ Tromsø, Norway
African Union, 2002	55: all countries in Africa	To advocate peace, security, and stability on the continent through greater cooperation, economic development, and global integration	▪ Addis Ababa, Ethiopia ▪ Johannesburg, South Africa

Economic Supranationalism

The most common reason for multiple states to participate in a collective cause is economics. The most significant economic benefits are increased trade members and regulations that consider the interest of all countries involved.

World Trade Organization (WTO) One of the largest and most influential supranational organizations is the World Trade Organization (WTO). The goal of the WTO is to have countries agree to a set of fair and non-discriminatory guidelines for international trade. A secondary goal of the WTO is to ensure that trade flows smoothly, freely, and predictibly.

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) focuses on the production of oil, or petroleum. Its mission is to coordinate and unify its members' petroleum policies in order to stabilize oil markets. Membership spans three continents, including countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Indonesia, Venezuela, Nigeria, and Iran. Ensuring a steady income for its members influences the quantity of oil supplied to the global market. Sometimes conflicts arise between the members. For example, one country may want to curtail production in order to drive prices up, while another member may want to increase production to generate more jobs.

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Seeking mutually beneficial trade agreements has fostered economic growth and peace for member states of ASEAN. For example, the nations of ASEAN had rapidly growing economies—well ahead of regional powerhouses such as Japan, South Korea, India, and Australia.

European Union In the years following World War II, European leaders hoped to create stronger economic and cultural ties that would bring peace to a region ravaged by war for centuries. European countries began to eliminate national barriers to trade and travel on the continent. They reduced tariffs (taxes on trade), established a common set of regulations on products to replace individual national regulations, and coordinated labor policies. The two major steps to overcome nationalism were the formation of the European Union (EU) in 1993 and establishment of a common currency (the Euro) in 1999.

The EU is a political and economic union of 27 democratic European states that has a single-market free-trade zone and movement toward a standardized system of laws. The borders between member states were opened and the movement of people and goods increased. For example, products made in Germany could now be sold and transported to Spain without additional fees or taxes. Nineteen countries in Europe adopted the Euro as their currency. A unified currency within this Eurozone increased efficiency and reduced the cost of trade.

The result of these changes provided European corporations with easy access to a large market—one that included far more people than the U.S. market—in which to sell their products. Success in Europe helped EU-based companies compete in the global marketplace.

THE EUROPEAN UNION, 2021
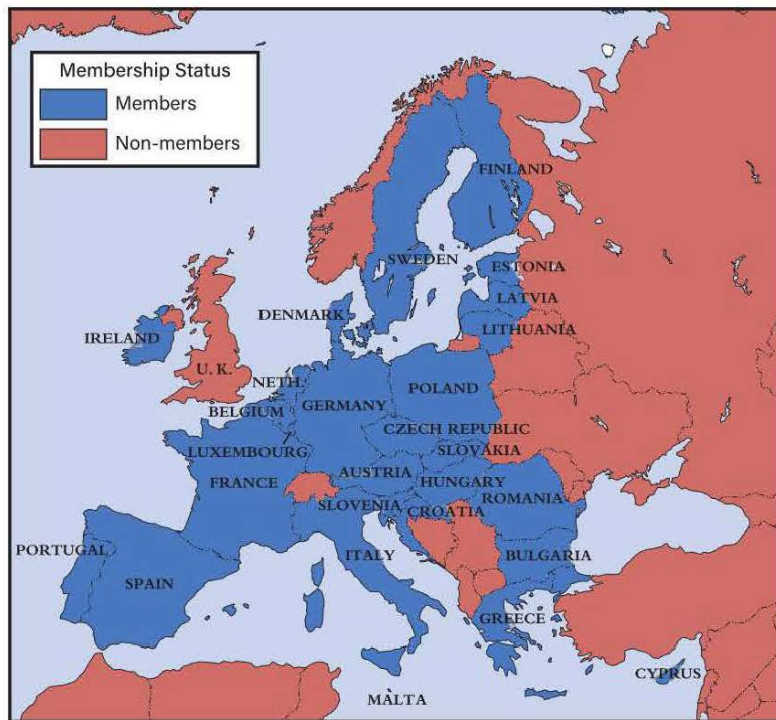
United Kingdom withdrew in 2020 (Brexit). There are currently five countries seeking admission: Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey.

United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement The success of the European Union inspired the creation of other regional, economic supranational organizations such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In 1993, the governments of the United States, Canada, and Mexico signed this economic treaty in order to compete in a rapidly changing and extremely competitive global market. In 2020, the treaty was renegotiated and is now called the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Transnational Corporations The rise of **transnational corporations**, companies that conduct business on a global scale, has dramatically weakened state sovereignty. In contrast to corporations based in a single country, transnationals have no strong connection to any one place. As a result, they can move jobs from one country to another in order to take advantage of lower wages, lower taxes, or weaker laws on worker safety and environmental protection. Their ability to move operations around the world gives any single country less influence over them. Some members of the EU are concerned with countries losing their cultural identity as people of different backgrounds move to other countries within the EU, resulting in a changing cultural landscape.

Military and Strategic Supranationalism

Another example of supranationalism is military cooperation through mutual defense alliances. One such alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), was created in 1949 by the United States and its allies in response to tensions with the Soviet Union. NATO is the largest military alliance in the

world. While NATO did not confront the Soviet military directly, it did use its power to stabilize conflicts in the Balkans during the 1990s.

After the Cold War ended, several former allies of the Soviet Union in Central and Eastern Europe joined NATO. The first were the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland in 1999. Their strategic shift angered Russia, and renewed tension between NATO and Russia.

THE GROWTH OF NATO, 1949-2020
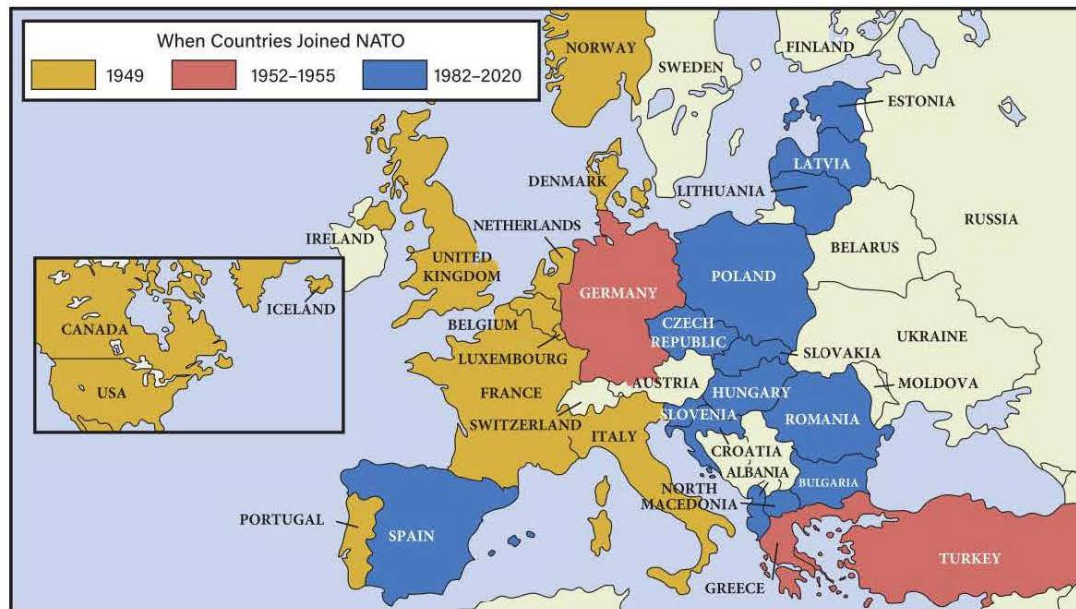
Supranationalism and the Environment

As the 21st century progresses, worldwide concern for the environment has become one of the biggest challenges facing states, supranational organizations, and transnational corporations. Most transnational corporations are based in the economic core—the countries of the developed world. However, much of the production and manufacturing occurs in the economic periphery—countries of the developing world—in order to minimize labor, land, and resource costs. This creates tension.

In wealthy countries such as the United States, workers resent corporations sending their jobs overseas. In poorer countries, people have different concerns. The government of a poorer country, more in need of jobs and development than a wealthy country, might be more willing to accept an environmentally damaging facility. Countries make different economic decisions based on the options they have.

As a result of lax environmental regulations in periphery countries, transnational corporations often pollute the air, water, and soil. To further exacerbate this problem, neighboring states are subject to this pollution as well. The largest supranational organization, the United Nations, has attempted to resolve some of these issues through the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea, and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

The Impact of Technology

The Internet, social media, and the ease of jet travel have had varied effects on how people relate to each other around the world:

- promoted globalization by connecting people across boundaries
- weakened globalization by helping subnational groups to organize
- supported **democratization**—the transition from autocratic to more representative forms of politics—by helping reform movements to communicate in China, Iran, Egypt, and other countries
- threatened democratization where the government has tried to limit the spread of information
- created a digital divide between countries with and without access to information for either political or infrastructure reasons
- increased **time-space compression**, the social and psychological effects of faster movement of information over space in a shorter period of time

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REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *How do political, economic, cultural, and technological changes challenge state sovereignty?*

Changes	Challenges to Sovereignty

KEY TERMS

autonomous regions
subnationalism
balkanization
globalization
supranationalism
United Nations (UN)
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
European Union (EU)
United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
Arctic Council
African Union
World Trade Organization (WTO)
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)
transnational corporations
democratization
time-space compression

Consequences of Centrifugal and Centripetal Forces

Essential Question: How do the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces apply at the state scale?

As defined in Topic 3.3, **centrifugal forces** divide the citizenry in a country while **centripetal forces** unite a country's population. Often, an action has potential to be both types of forces at once. For example, a political election can unite people behind a leader or issue—or divide people bitterly. It is uncommon to find a single event or process that can be neatly defined as centrifugal or centripetal.

Geographers study the extent to which these forces contribute to nation-building by examining interaction, scale, timing, and perspective. To unify a state, a government must define, control, and defend its boundaries. Additionally, the government must blend the different groups within its borders into one society.

Centrifugal Forces

Often a minority population is concentrated in various pockets of a state, thus resulting in minority self-awareness and an emerging nationalist movement. **Regionalism** is when loyalty to a distinct portion of a country is more important than loyalty to the entire country. Regionalism can create centrifugal forces.

When a segment of a state's minority population feels underrepresented and lacking political power, it might pursue a path of separation from the larger state. Canada provides a good example. The country's French-speaking population, concentrated in southern Quebec, has pursued more power over local issues, such as education and administrative governance, including its judicial system. However, for some French-speaking Canadians in Quebec, this is not enough; therefore, political centrifugal forces still exist.

On the economic side, globalization has widened the gap between the rich and poor within a state. Uneven development within a country may lead to divisions between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Uneven development results in uneven benefits and the separation and fragmentation of a state. For example, India is an emerging economic power, but it is not a strongly united country. Despite rapid economic growth on a global scale, India still has large segments of its population living in abject poverty. This poverty is divided along regional lines.

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF POVERTY IN INDIA

Describe the location of regions in India that suffer the highest and lowest percentages of poverty. Explain how high poverty can be a centrifugal force.

Centrifugal cultural forces have intensified as a result of globalization. Declining state sovereignty and economic advances have empowered ethnonational groups to demand more autonomy. **Ethnonationalism** is support for the political interests of a particular ethnic group within a state, especially its national independence or self-determination. For example, fragmentation within Syria and Iraq gave rise to Kurdish independence movements in those countries.

Centripetal Forces

Governments, religious groups, and other institutions use a combination of methods to promote unity in a society. Centripetal forces are often focused on economic development, political identity, and cultural practices.

Economic Development One of the most effective centripetal forces used by governments throughout history has been building infrastructure. Improved infrastructure—such as efficient transportation systems and well-constructed roads and railways—can promote trade, communications, dependence, and other forms of connections among the population within a state. Improvements in transportation are one way to promote unity by increasing interaction

among different ethno-linguistic groups. These can increase the overall wealth of the country.

Political Identity Governments attempt to build political unity throughout its population in several ways:

- Unifying institutions, such as schools, promote social cohesion by educating students on the historical accomplishments of the state. Unifying institutions may also promote holidays that are historically significant, such as an independence day or a day to honor veterans.

- **Nationalism**, the strong feelings of patriotism and loyalty one feels toward one's country, promotes a sense of belonging, even if a country's population is an ethnically diverse one.

- The acceptance of rules or laws and the promotion of political equality help to reinforce political centripetal forces. Examples of this are governmental administration practices, such as a fair legal and judicial system and protection of the populace by the government.

- Customs and rituals based on citizenship are a common way to promote a sense of common identity. In the United States, public school students throughout the country often recite the Pledge of Allegiance each day.

Cultural Practices States with a population that is *homogeneous*, one that shares a common trait, likely have cultural practices that function as centripetal forces. For example, in heavily Islamic countries such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, Ramadan is a month-long religious observation that helps to unite the overall population. Japan, which has preserved a homogeneous culture by maintaining restrictive immigration policies, has strong cultural centripetal forces such as a common language and a shared sense of history.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL FORCES		
	Centripetal Forces	**Centrifugal Forces**
Economic	- Quality transportation and communication infrastructure - Wealth and high quality of life	- Poor transportation and communication infrastructure - Poverty and uneven distribution of wealth
Social	- Acceptance of racial, ethnic, and gender differences	- Practices that discriminate and exclude based on race, ethnicity, or gender
Political	- Just laws that protect all people equally	- Laws that discriminate against different segments of society
Environmental	- Low pollution and access to clean air and water in all regions	- High pollution and unequal access to clean water
Cultural	- Celebration of a national day of importance - Common religion of the majority of country	- Some religions not accepted - Holidays that celebrate controversial individuals or events

Essential Question: *How do the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces apply at the state scale?*

Centrifugal Forces and Their Impact	Centripetal Forces and Their Impact

KEY TERMS

centrifugal forces

centripetal forces

regionalism

ethnonationalism

nationalism

GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES: *UNITED KINGDOM AND EUROPEAN UNION*

In June of 2016, the citizens of the United Kingdom (Britain) voted to leave or exit the European Union (EU), hence the name Brexit. In January of 2021, the United Kingdom and EU reached an agreement of separation and formally split. The United Kingdom and EU will continue to have a free trade zone, but movement of people and products between the two regions will have new restrictions.

The vote to leave demonstrated very clear demographic and geographic patterns. Older, less educated, and unemployed populations were more in favor of leaving the EU, while younger and highly educated voters favored staying in the EU. Young people in the UK had a 65 percent voter turnout rate, while over 90 percent of older populations chose to vote. Scotland, Northern Ireland, and highly populated areas near London voted to remain in the EU. The rural and industrial areas of England and Wales voted heavily to leave.
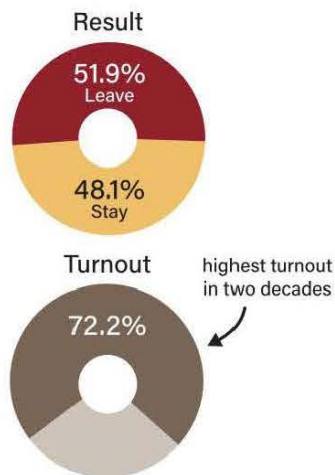
People who voted to leave the EU were often swayed by concerns about immigration into the UK and a desire to control the United Kingdom's political and financial future without interference from mainland Europe. People who voted to remain were in favor of the open borders and the benefits of economic exchange with mainland Europe. London has many world and European headquarters for transnational companies. Some believe that after Brexit companies may move their headquarters and numerous jobs to cities like Berlin and Paris within the EU.
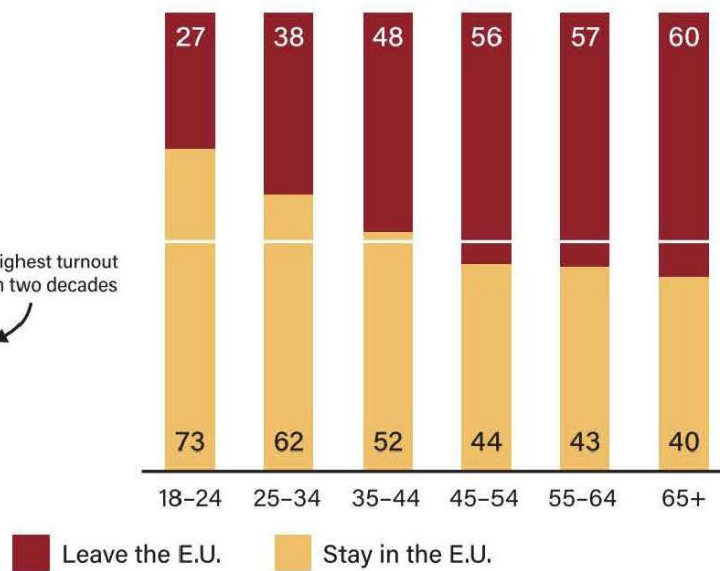
Scotland and Northern Ireland

Both Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to remain in the EU because they experienced rapid economic growth since joining the EU. Since the Brexit vote, the government of Scotland has increased their desire for independence from the UK in hopes of joining the EU as an independent country. Concerns are high in Scotland and Northern Ireland that numerous jobs will be lost and economic growth will decline.

Residents of Northern Ireland could have a different experience than the rest of the UK. Northern Ireland's citizens have the option of dual citizenship in the UK and Ireland. The country of Ireland is independent and still a member of the EU. If Northern Ireland's citizens choose to get an Ireland passport they can still move freely within the EU and receive all of the benefits of EU citizenship.

The U.K. voted to leave in June 2016

Result

51.9% Leave

48.1% Stay

Turnout

highest turnout in two decades

72.2%

Brexit Vote By Age

Age	18–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+
Leave the E.U.	27	38	48	56	57	60
Stay in the E.U.	73	62	52	44	43	40

■ Leave the E.U.   ■ Stay in the E.U.

1. Describe the demographic characteristics of people who voted for leaving the EU.

2. Describe the geographic patterns for areas that voted for staying in the EU.

3. Explain how the changing function of borders could influence the United Kingdom.

Various titles of a single map can reflect competing perspectives on geographic relationships. In 1947 the British ended colonial rule in the Indian subcontinent. They divided the colony into two countries, India and Pakistan. (In 1971, the eastern part of Pakistan became the independent country of Bangladesh.) The basis for the separation was religion. Regions where nearly everyone was a Muslim became Pakistan. The rest of the region, with a Hindu majority, became India.

However, people disputed control over the region of Kashmir, in the northern tip of the subcontinent. Most people were Muslims, but the rulers were Hindus, so both Pakistan and India felt a strong claim on it. People failed to agree on a formal boundary. Instead, they accepted a "line of control." Pakistan controls the territory northwest of this line, while India controls the territory southeast of the line. To make the issue more complicated, China claims part of eastern Kashmir. Each country is unwilling to release its claims on the Kashmir because of the wealth of fresh water and natural resources in the region.

The title of a map can influence the point of view or perspective of people viewing a map.

1. If the title of the map was "World's Most Dangerous Boundary Dispute," describe the impact of this title on how you think about the map.

2. If the title of the map was "Indo-Pakistani Boundary Dilemma," describe the impact of this title on how you think about the map.

3. Create a new title for the map that is fair and representative of the dispute.
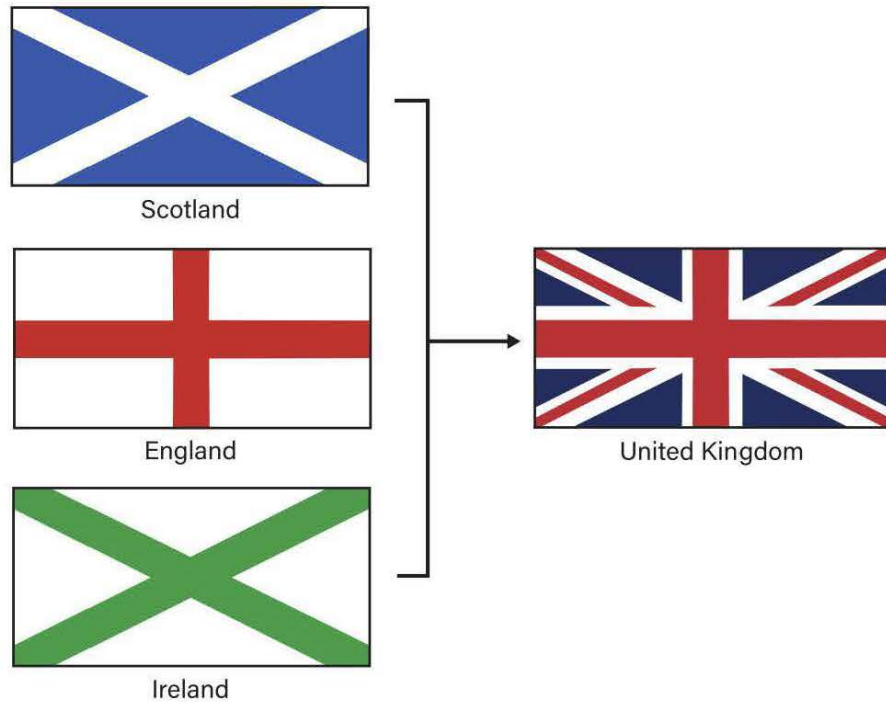
CHAPTER 10 REVIEW:
Challenges in the Modern State

Topics 4.8–4.10

Question 1 refers to the following diagram.

Scotland

England

Ireland

United Kingdom

1. Notice how the crosses in the flags of Scotland, England, and Ireland are combined in the flag of the United Kingdom. Which process does this represent?

(A) The balkanization of the British Isles

(B) The formation of autonomous regions within a state

(C) The process of irredentism in uniting people with the same culture

(D) The creation of a single state out of separate nations

(E) The centrifugal forces pulling a country apart

2. The presence of centrifugal forces within a country has led many central governments to transfer power to regional or local governments. This process is called?

(A) Devolution

(B) Acculturation

(C) Autocratic rule

(D) Imperialism

(E) Capitalism

3. Which of the following terms best applies to what a country experiences when its unity is threatened by inequality or economic problems?

(A) Centrifugal forces

(B) Centripetal forces

(C) Colonialism

(D) Federalism

(E) Supranationalism

4. Which provides the strongest support for the conclusion that Japan has few centrifugal forces?

(A) Japan is an island located off the east coast of China.

(B) Japan is part of the United Nations.

(C) Japan has never colonized another country.

(D) Japan has a high degree of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity.

(E) Japan has one of the largest economies in the world.

5. Which is NOT an example of a centripetal force?

(A) About nine-tenths of Swedes speak Swedish as their first language.

(B) About 95 percent of Iranians belong to the Shia Muslim faith.

(C) The Mindanao region of the Philippines has poor infrastructure and inadequate basic services.

(D) Since the end of World War II, Europe has worked to remove trade and political barriers among countries.

(E) About 96 out of every 100 people in Thailand identify as part of the Thai ethnic group.

6. Which groups have been gaining more local power around the world as a result of devolution?

(A) Indigenous people

(B) French-speaking people

(C) Spanish-speaking people

(D) Recent immigrants from East Asia

(E) Recent immigrants from Syria

7. Which of the following best describes the effect of globalization related to state sovereignty?

(A) States' sovereignty has clearly increased as a result of globalization.

(B) State sovereignty has increased because of the need to defend borders from imperialistic states.

(C) Globalization has not had an effect on state sovereignty.

(D) States have given up some sovereignty in order to join supranationalistic organizations.

(E) The number of sovereign states in the world has declined during the era of globalization.

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION

1. Political, economic, cultural, or technological changes can challenge a country's ability to self-rule, or its sovereignty. Many boundaries in the world have changed over the past 50 years. Some countries have split into smaller countries and some have joined supranational organizations such as the European Union (EU) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

EUROPE AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

INTERNAL BOUNDARIES IN CANADA

(A) Describe the difference between centripetal and centrifugal forces.

(B) Describe the impact of ONE cultural centrifugal force on the unity of either Canada or the former Yugoslavia.

(C) Explain how federalism might reduce tension within a country.

(D) Explain how nationalism can be both a centripetal and a centrifugal force within a country.

(E) Explain ONE economic reason why many states of Eastern Europe such as Poland, Slovakia, and Romania chose to join the EU.

(F) Explain ONE political reason why many states of Eastern Europe such as Poland, Slovakia, and Romania chose to join NATO.

(G) Describe the role that the Internet or social media has played in fueling subnational protest movements.

APPLYING GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS

Applying geographic skills is critical for success on the AP Exam. For each skill listed write a one-paragraph response that illustrates your understanding of the question. Support your response with specific examples and evidence. Refer to the Unit 1 introduction (pages 3–7) for tips on how to apply geographic skills.

1D Describe TWO geographic concepts, processes, models, or theories in Unit 4 and support them with specific geographic examples.

2C Explain a likely outcome of the Kurds realizing the goal of gaining their own country of Kurdistan. What challenges will they face?

3C Using the map and data in Topic 4.9, explain the patterns and trends related to the number of countries created since 1960.

4B Choose a map from Unit 4 and explain its strengths and limitations.

5A Locate and identify Unit 4 maps, data, and/or images that illustrate the following scales of analysis: global, regional, national, and local.

WRITE AS A GEOGRAPHER: *USE EXAMPLES*

Strong answers to free-response questions usually include specific examples. These examples are one way to show that the writer understands a concept well enough to apply it. They also show that the writer can make distinctions between related concepts such as nation and state, or centripetal and centrifugal.

For each term, list the letter of the example below that best demonstrates it.

1. terrorism
2. subnationalism
3. irredentism
4. supranationalism
5. balkanization
6. devolution

(A) Several dozen countries in Africa form an organization to promote security and economic development throughout the continent.

(B) The national government of France transfers decision-making on building roads and bridges to local and regional governments.

(C) In 1881, a group of Russians attempt to overthrow the government by assassinating the country's leader, Tsar Alexander II.

(D) In early 1861, Robert E. Lee felt more loyalty to his state of Virginia than to his country, the United States.

(E) When the French empire in West Africa collapsed, the region split into eight different countries.

(F) Some Norwegians argue that Norway is the rightful ruler of parts of Sweden that were once part of Norway.