**Unit IV. Political Organization of Space**

 A. The contemporary political map has been shaped by events of the past.

1. Explain the structure of the contemporary political map.
   1. Independent states are the primary building blocks of the world political map.
   2. Types of political entities include nations, states, nation-states, stateless nations, multinational states, multistate nations, and autonomous regions.
2. Explain the evolution of the contemporary political map.
   1. The concept of the modern nation-state began in Europe.
   2. Colonialism and imperialism led to the spread of nationalism and influenced contemporary political boundaries.
3. Evaluate the geopolitical forces that influence the contemporary political map.
   1. Independence movements and democratization have shaped the political map since the end of World War II.
   2. The fall of Communism ended the Cold War, led to the creation of newly independent states, and changed the world balance of power.

 B. Spatial political patterns reflect ideas of territoriality and power at a variety of scales.

1. Explain the concepts of political power and territoriality.
   1. Political power is expressed geographically as control over people, land, and resources (e.g., heartland, rimland, and organic theories).
   2. Territoriality is the connection of people, their culture, and their economic systems to the land.
2. Evaluate the nature and function of international and internal boundaries.
   1. Boundaries are defined, delimited, demarcated, and administered.
   2. International boundaries establish the limits of sovereignty and can be the source of disputes.
   3. Boundaries can influence identity and promote or prevent international or internal interactions and exchanges.
   4. The Law of the Sea has enabled states to extend their boundaries offshore, which sometimes results in conflicts.
   5. Voting districts, redistricting, and gerrymandering influence the results of elections at various scales.
3. Analyze the spatial relationships between political systems and patterns of culture and economy.
   1. Political boundaries do not always coincide with patterns of language, religion, ethnicity, nationality, and economy.
4. Compare and contrast forms of governance
   1. Forms of governance include unitary states (centralized government) and federal states.
   2. Powers of the subdivisions of states vary according to the form of governance (e.g., the United States and Switzerland as federal states, France as a unitary state).
   3. State morphology (e.g., compact, elongated, perforated, fragmented, prorupted states) has economic, political, and social implications.
5. Describe patterns of local and metropolitan governance.
   1. Local and metropolitan forms of governance (e.g., municipalities, school districts, regional planning commissions) are subnational political units that have varying degrees of local control.

 C. The forces of globalization challenge contemporary political–territorial arrangements.

1. Explain how the political, economic, cultural, and technological elements of globalization challenge state sovereignty.
   1. Some forces that may lead to supranationalism include economies of scale, trade agreements, military alliances, and transnational environmental challenges.
   2. Supranationalism is expressed in the creation of multinational organizations (e.g., UN, NATO, EU, ASEAN, NAFTA).
   3. Some forces that may lead to devolution of states include physical geography, ethnic separatism, terrorism, economic and social problems, and irredentism.
   4. Devolution is expressed in the fragmentation of states into autonomous regions (e.g., Nunavut, Native American reservations), subnational political–territorial units (e.g., Spain, Belgium, Canada), or Balkanization (e.g., former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus).
   5. Advances in communication technology have facilitated devolution, supranationalism, and democratization.
2. Apply the concepts of centrifugal and centripetal forces at the national scale.
   1. Centrifugal forces can originate in political dimensions (e.g., majority/ minority relationships, armed conflicts), economic dimensions (e.g., uneven development), or cultural dimensions (e.g., stateless nations, ethnic movements).
   2. Centripetal forces can originate in political dimensions (e.g., national identity), economic dimensions (e.g., equitable infrastructure development), or cultural dimensions (e.g., linguistic, religious, and ethnic similarities)