

KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Religion versus Government Policies
- Religion versus Religion

Learning Outcome 6.4.1

Understand reasons for religious conflicts arising from government policies.

The twentieth century was a century of global conflict—two world wars during the first half of the century and the Cold War between supporters of democracy and communism during the second half. With the end of the Cold War, the threat of global conflict has receded in the twenty-first century, but local conflicts have increased in areas of cultural diversity, as will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

An element of cultural diversity that has led to conflict in many localities is religion. The attempt by intense adherents of one religion to organize Earth's surface can conflict with the spatial expression of other religious or nonreligious ideas.

Contributing to more intense religious conflict has been a resurgence of religious **fundamentalism**, which is a literal interpretation and a strict and intense adherence to basic principles of a religion (or a religious branch, denomination, or sect). In a world increasingly dominated by a global culture and economy, religious fundamentalism is one of the most important ways in which a group can maintain a distinctive cultural identity. A group convinced that its religious view is the correct one may spatially intrude upon the territory controlled by other religious groups.

Religion versus Government Policies

Religious groups may oppose government policies seen as promoting social change conflicting with traditional religious values. The role of religion in organizing Earth's surface has diminished in some societies because of political and economic change.

Islam has been particularly affected by a perceived conflict between religious values and modernization of the economy. Hinduism also has been forced to react to new nonreligious ideas from the West. Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam have all been challenged by Communist governments that diminish the importance of religion in

society. Yet, in recent years, religious principles have become increasingly important in the political organization of countries, especially where a branch of Christianity or Islam is the prevailing religion.

RELIGION VERSUS SOCIAL CHANGE

In developing countries, participation in the global economy and culture can expose local residents to values and beliefs originating in developed countries of North America and Europe. North Americans and Europeans may not view economic development as incompatible with religious values, but many religious adherents in developing countries do, especially where Christianity is not the predominant religion.

TALIBAN VERSUS WESTERN VALUES. When the Taliban gained power in Afghanistan in 1996, many Afghans welcomed them as preferable to the corrupt and brutal warlords who had been running the country. U.S. and other Western officials also welcomed them as strong defenders against a possible new invasion by Russia.

The Taliban (which means "religious students") had run Islamic Knowledge Movement [religious] schools, mosques, shrines, and other religious and social services since the seventh century A.D., shortly after the arrival of Islam in Afghanistan. Once in control of Afghanistan's government in the 1990s, the Taliban imposed very strict laws inspired by Islamic values as the Taliban interpreted them:

- "Western, non-Islamic" leisure activities were banned, such as playing music, flying kites, watching television, and surfing the Internet.
- Soccer stadiums were converted to settings for executions and floggings.
- Men were beaten for shaving their beards and women stoned for committing adultery.
- Homosexuals were buried alive, and prostitutes were hanged in front of large audiences.
- Thieves had their hands cut off, and women wearing nail polish had their fingers cut off.

Western values were not the only targets: Enormous Buddhist statues as old as the second century A.D. were destroyed in 2001 because they were worshipped as "graven images," in violation of Islam (Figure 6-42). The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice enforced the laws. The Taliban believed that they had been called by Allah to purge Afghanistan of sin and violence and make it a pure Islamic state. Islamic scholars criticized the Taliban as poorly educated in Islamic law and history and for misreading the Quran.

A U.S.-led coalition overthrew the Taliban in 2001 and replaced it with a democratically elected government. However, the Taliban was able to regroup and resume its fight to regain control of Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan (see Chapter 8).



▲ **FIGURE 6-42 TALIBAN DESTRUCTION** (top) An image taken in 1998 of a 55-meter (180-foot) statue of Buddha in Bamiyan, Afghanistan. (bottom) The empty niche after the Taliban destroyed the statue in 2001.

Pause and Reflect 6.4.1

Why did the Taliban destroy priceless artistic works from Afghanistan's ancient past?

HINDUISM VERSUS SOCIAL EQUALITY. Hinduism has been strongly challenged since the 1800s, when British colonial administrators introduced their social and moral concepts to India. The most vulnerable aspect of the Hindu religion was its rigid caste system, which was the class or distinct hereditary order into which a Hindu was assigned, according to religious law.

The caste system apparently originated around 1500 B.C., when Aryans invaded India from the west. The Aryans divided themselves into four castes that developed strong differences in social and economic position:

- Brahmins, the priests and top administrators (Figure 6-43)
- Kshatriyas, or warriors
- Vaisyas, or merchants
- Shudras, or agricultural workers and artisans

The Shudras occupied a distinctly lower status than the other three castes. Below the four castes were the Dalits, outcasts, or untouchables, who did work considered too dirty for other castes. In theory, the untouchables were



▲ **FIGURE 6-43 HINDU CASTE** Young boys of the Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaisya castes perform a ceremony to mark the beginning of their studies.

descended from the indigenous people who dwelled in India prior to the Aryan conquest.

Over the centuries, these original castes split into thousands of subcastes. Until recently, social relations among the castes were limited, and the rights of non-Brahmins, especially Dalits, were restricted. In Hinduism, because everyone was different, it was natural that each individual should belong to a particular caste or position in the social order. British administrators and Christian missionaries pointed out the shortcomings of the caste system, such as neglect of the untouchables' health and economic problems.

The type of Hinduism practiced depends in part on an individual's caste. A high-caste Brahman may practice a form of Hinduism based on knowledge of relatively obscure historical texts. At the other end of the caste system, a low-caste illiterate in a rural village may perform religious rituals without a highly developed set of written explanations for them.

The rigid caste system has been considerably relaxed in recent years. The Indian government classifies untouchables, shudras, and other historically discriminated castes as "scheduled castes." They comprise 16 percent of India's total population and are now often called Dalit (Figure 6-46). Consciousness of caste persists: A government plan to devise a quota system designed to give untouchables more places in the country's universities generated strong opposition. People looking for a marriage partner advertise their caste and the castes they are willing to consider for a spouse.

▼ **FIGURE 6-44 DALIT** A Dalit cleans the streets in India.



RELIGION VERSUS COMMUNISM

Learning Outcome 6.4.2

Summarize reasons for conflicts between religions.

Organized religion was challenged in the twentieth century by the rise of Communism in Eastern Europe and Asia. The three religions most affected were Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Communist regimes generally discouraged religious belief and practice.

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM VERSUS THE FORMER SOVIET UNION.

In 1721, Czar Peter the Great made the Russian Orthodox Church a part of the Russian government (Figure 6-45). The patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church was replaced by a 12-member committee, known as the Holy Synod, nominated by the czar.

Following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, which overthrew the czar, the Communist government of the Soviet Union pursued antireligious programs. Karl Marx had called religion “the opium of the people,” a view shared by V. I. Lenin and other early Communist leaders. Marxism became the official doctrine of the Soviet Union, so religious doctrine was a potential threat to the success of the revolution.

The Soviet government in 1918 eliminated the official church–state connection that Peter the Great had forged. All church buildings and property were nationalized and could be used only with local government permission. People’s religious beliefs could not be destroyed overnight, but the role of organized religion in Soviet life could be reduced—and it was. The Orthodox religion retained adherents in the Soviet Union, especially among the elderly, but younger people generally had little contact with the church beyond attending a service perhaps once a year. With religious organizations prevented from conducting social and cultural work, religion dwindled in daily life.

The end of Communist rule in the late twentieth century brought a religious revival in Eastern Europe,

▼ **FIGURE 6-45 ST BASIL’S, MOSCOW** A Russian Orthodox cathedral has stood at the center of Moscow since the sixteenth century. The communists turned it into a museum.



especially where Roman Catholicism is the most prevalent branch of Christianity, including Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Property confiscated by the Communist governments reverted to Church ownership, and attendance at church services increased.

In Central Asia, countries that were former parts of the Soviet Union—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—most people are Muslims. These newly independent countries are struggling to determine the extent to which laws should be rewritten to conform to Islamic custom rather than to the secular tradition inherited from the Soviet Union.

Pause and Reflect 6.4.2

How did the end of communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe affect religion?

BUDDHISM VERSUS SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES.

In Southeast Asia, Buddhists were hurt by the long Vietnam War—waged between the French and later by the Americans, on one side, and Communist groups on the other. Neither antagonist was particularly sympathetic to Buddhists. U.S. air raids in Laos and Cambodia destroyed many Buddhist shrines, and other shrines were vandalized by Vietnamese and by the Khmer Rouge Cambodian Communists. On a number of occasions, Buddhists immolated (burned) themselves to protest policies of the South Vietnamese government.

The current Communist governments in Southeast Asia have discouraged religious activities and permitted monuments to decay, most notably the Angkor Wat complex in Cambodia, considered one of the world’s most beautiful Buddhist and Hindu structures (Figure 6-46). In any event, these countries do not have the funds necessary to restore the structures, although international organizations have helped.



▲ **FIGURE 6-46 VANDALIZING RELIGIOUS SHRINES** Angkor Wat, Cambodia, considered one of the world’s most important Hindu and Buddhist shrines, was vandalized by the Khmer Rouge.

Religion versus Religion

Refer to the map of world religions near the beginning of this chapter (Figure 6-3). Conflicts are most likely to occur where colors change, indicating a boundary between two religious groups.

Two long-standing conflicts involving religious groups are in Northern Ireland and Southwest Asia.

RELIGIOUS WARS IN IRELAND

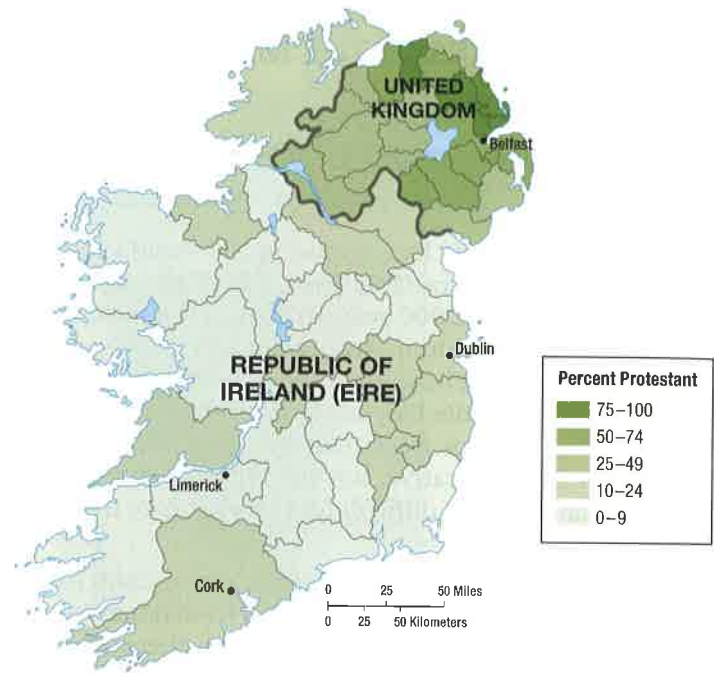
The most troublesome religious boundary in Western Europe lies on the island of Eire (Ireland). The Republic of Ireland, which occupies five-sixths of the island, is 87 percent Roman Catholic, but the island's northern one-sixth, which is part of the United Kingdom rather than Ireland, is 46 percent Protestant and 40 percent Roman Catholic, according to the 2001 census. (The remaining 14 percent stated no religion or did not respond.)

The entire island was an English colony for many centuries and was made part of the United Kingdom in 1801. Agitation for independence from Britain increased in Ireland during the nineteenth century, especially after poor economic conditions and famine in the 1840s led to mass emigration. Following a succession of bloody confrontations, Ireland became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire in 1921. Complete independence was declared in 1937, and a republic was created in 1949. When most of Ireland became independent, a majority in six northern counties voted to remain in the United Kingdom. Protestants, who comprised the majority in Northern Ireland, preferred to be part of the predominantly Protestant United Kingdom rather than join the predominantly Roman Catholic Republic of Ireland (Figure 6-47).

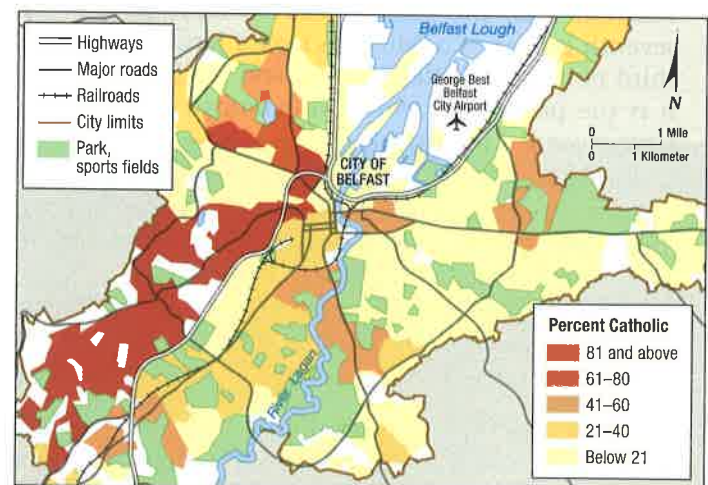
Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland have been victimized by discriminatory practices, such as exclusion from higher-paying jobs and better schools. The capital Belfast is highly segregated, with predominantly Catholic neighborhoods to the west and Protestant neighborhoods to the east (Figure 6-48). Demonstrations by Roman Catholics protesting discrimination began in 1968. Since then, more than 3,000 have been killed in Northern Ireland—both Protestants and Roman Catholics—in a continuing cycle of demonstrations and protests.

A small number of Roman Catholics in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a militant organization dedicated to achieving Irish national unity by whatever means available, including violence. Similarly, a scattering of Protestants created extremist organizations to fight the IRA, including the Ulster Defense Force (UDF).

Although the overwhelming majority of Northern Ireland's Roman Catholics and Protestants are willing to live peacefully with the other religious group, extremists disrupt daily life for everyone and do well in elections. As long as most Protestants are firmly committed to remaining in the United Kingdom and most Roman Catholics are



▲ **FIGURE 6-47 DISTRIBUTION OF CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN IRELAND, 1911** Long a colony of England, Ireland became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire in 1921. In 1937, it became a completely independent country, but 26 districts in the north of Ireland chose to remain part of the United Kingdom. The Republic of Ireland today is 87 percent Roman Catholic, whereas Northern Ireland has a Protestant majority. The boundary between Roman Catholics and Protestants does not coincide precisely with the international border, so Northern Ireland includes some communities that are predominantly Roman Catholic. This is the root of a religious conflict that continues today.



▲ **FIGURE 6-48 DISTRIBUTION OF CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN BELFAST** Belfast, Northern Ireland, is highly segregated. Most Roman Catholics live to the west, and Protestants to the east.

equally committed to union with the Republic of Ireland, peaceful settlement appears difficult. Peace agreements implemented in 1999 provided for the sharing of power, but the British government has suspended the arrangement several times because of violations.

RELIGIOUS WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Learning Outcome 6.4.3

Analyze reasons for religious conflict in the Middle East.

Conflict in the Middle East is among the world's longest standing and most intractable. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have fought for 2,000 years to control the same small strip of land in the Eastern Mediterranean.

To some extent, the hostility among Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Middle East stems from their similar heritage. All three groups trace their origins to Abraham in the Hebrew Bible narrative, but the religions diverged in ways that have made it difficult for them to share the same territory:

- *Judaism*, an ethnic religion, makes a special claim to the territory it calls the Promised Land. The major events in the development of Judaism took place there, and the religion's customs and rituals acquired meaning from the agricultural life of the ancient Hebrew tribe. Descendants of 10 of Jacob's sons, plus 2 of his grandsons, constituted the 12 tribes of Hebrews who emigrated from Egypt in the Exodus narrative. Each received a portion of Canaan. After the Romans gained control of the area, which they called the province of Palestine, they dispersed the Jews from Palestine, and only a handful were permitted to live in the region until the twentieth century.
- *Islam* became the most widely practiced religion in Palestine after the Muslim army conquered it in the seventh century A.D. Muslims regard Jerusalem as their third holiest city, after Makkah and Madinah, because it is the place from which Muhammad is thought to have ascended to heaven.
- *Christianity* considers Palestine the Holy Land and Jerusalem the Holy City because the major events in Jesus's life, death, and Resurrection were concentrated there. Most inhabitants of Palestine accepted Christianity after the religion was officially adopted by the Roman Empire and before the Muslim army conquest in the seventh century.

CRUSADES. In the seventh century, Muslims, now also called Arabs because they came from the Arabian peninsula, captured most of the Middle East, including Palestine and Jerusalem. The Arab Muslim presence the Arabic language across the Middle East and diffused subsequently converted most of the people from Christianity to Islam.

The Arab Muslims moved west across North Africa and invaded Europe at Gibraltar in A.D. 711 (see Figure 6-20). The army conquered most of the Iberian Peninsula, crossed the Pyrenees Mountains a few years later, and for a time occupied much of present-day France. Its initial advance in Europe was halted by the Franks (a West Germanic people), led by Charles Martel, at Poitiers, France, in 732. The

Muslims made further gains in Europe in subsequent years and continued to control portions of present-day Spain until 1492, but Martel's victory ensured that Christianity rather than Islam would be Europe's dominant religion.

To the east, Ottoman Turks captured Eastern Orthodox Christianity's most important city, Constantinople (present-day Istanbul in Turkey), in 1453 and advanced a few years later into southeast Europe, as far north as present-day Bosnia & Herzegovina. The recent civil war in that country is a legacy of the fifteenth-century Muslim invasion (see Chapter 7).

To recapture the Holy Land from its Muslim conquerors, European Christians launched a series of military campaigns, known as Crusades, over a 150-year period. Crusaders captured Jerusalem from the Muslims in 1099 during the First Crusade, lost it in 1187 (which led to the Third Crusade), regained it in 1229 as part of a treaty ending the Sixth Crusade, and lost it again in 1244.

Pause and Reflect 6.4.3

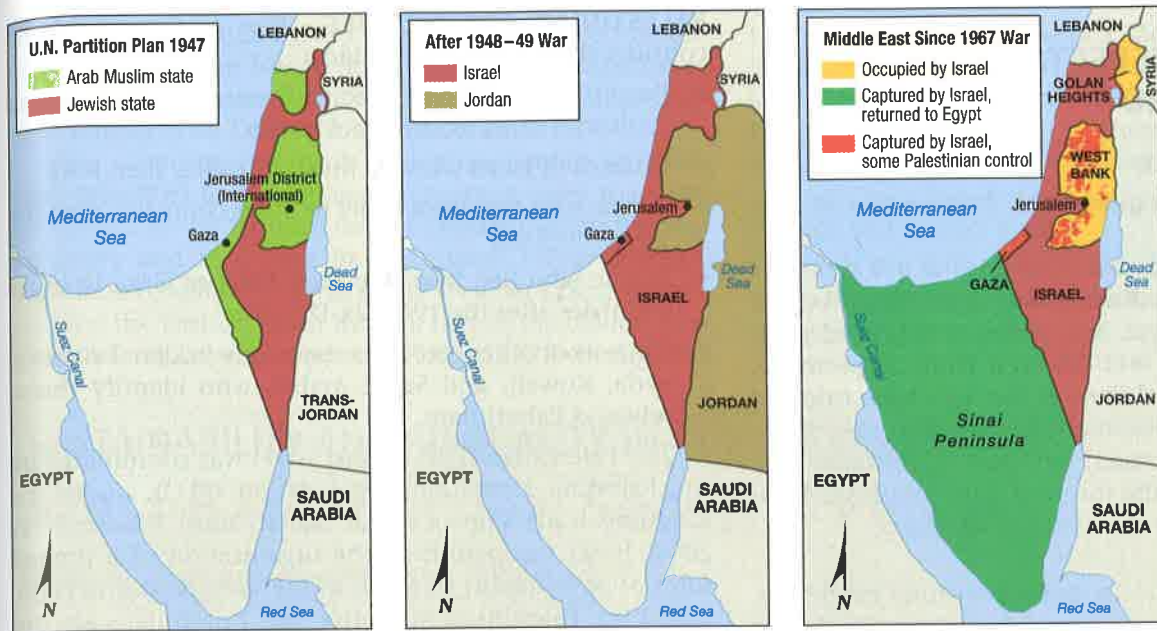
Why is a narrow strip of land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea so important in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam?

PARTITION OF PALESTINE. The Muslim Ottoman Empire controlled Palestine for most of the four centuries between 1516 and 1917. Upon the empire's defeat in World War I, the United Kingdom took over Palestine, under a mandate from the League of Nations, and later from the United Nations.

For a few years, the British allowed some Jews to return to Palestine, but immigration was restricted again during the 1930s, in response to intense pressure by Arabs in the region. As violence initiated by both Jewish and Muslim settlers escalated after World War II, the British announced their intention to withdraw from Palestine. The United Nations voted in 1947 to partition Palestine into two independent states, one Jewish and one Muslim (Figure 6-49, left). Jerusalem was to be an international city, open to all religions, and run by the United Nations.

WARS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND NEIGHBORS. When the British withdrew in 1948, Jews declared an independent state of Israel within the boundaries prescribed by the UN resolution. Over the next quarter-century, Israel fought four wars with its neighbors:

- **1948–1949 Independence War.** The day after Israel declared independence, the neighboring Arab Muslim states declared war. Israel survived the attack, and the combatants signed an armistice in 1949. Israel's boundaries were extended beyond the UN partition, including the western suburbs of Jerusalem. Jordan gained control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including the Old City, where holy places are clustered. Egypt gained the Gaza Strip.
- **1956 Suez War.** Egypt seized the Suez Canal, a key shipping route between Europe and Asia that had been



◀ **FIGURE 6-49**
BOUNDARY CHANGES IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE (left) The 1947 UN partition plan, (center) Israel after the 1948–1949 war, (right) Israel and its neighbors since the 1967 Six-Day War.

built and controlled up until then by France and the United Kingdom. Egypt also blockaded international waterways near its shores that Israeli ships were using. Israel, France, and the United Kingdom attacked Egypt and got the waterways reopened, although Egypt retained control of the Suez Canal.

- **1967 Six-Day War.** Israel's neighbors massed a quarter-million troops along the borders and again blocked Israeli ships from using international waterways. In retaliation, Israel launched a surprise attack, destroying the coalition's air forces. Israel captured territory:
 - From Jordan, the Old City of Jerusalem and the West Bank (the territory west of the Jordan River taken by Jordan in the 1948–1949 war) (Figure 6-50)
 - From Syria, the Golan Heights
 - From Egypt, the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula
- **1973 Yom Kippur War.** A surprise attack on Israel by its neighbors took place on the holiest day of the year for Jews. The war ended without a change in boundaries.

- **1979 Peace Treaty.** Egypt's President Anwar Sadat and Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed a peace treaty in 1979, following a series of meetings with U.S. President Jimmy Carter at Camp David, Maryland. Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, and in return Egypt recognized Israel's right to exist. Sadat was assassinated by Egyptian soldiers, who were extremist Muslims opposed to compromising with Israel, but his successor Hosni Mubarak carried out the terms of the treaty. A half-century after the Six-Day War, the status of the other territories occupied by Israel has still not been settled.



▶ **FIGURE 6-50 WEST BANK SETTLEMENT** In this Google Earth image from 2010, the Israeli settlement Betar Illit is under construction (top of the photo) in the West Bank, on a hillside overlooking the Palestinian villages Nahalin (bottom) and Husan (top right).

CONFLICTING PERSPECTIVES OF THE HOLY LAND

Learning Outcome 6.4.4

Describe differences in geographic frameworks in the Middle East.

After the 1973 war, the Palestinians emerged as Israel's principal opponent. Egypt and Jordan renounced their claims to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, respectively, and recognized the Palestinians as the legitimate rulers of these territories. The Palestinians in turn also saw themselves as the legitimate rulers of Israel. Palestinian and Israeli perspectives over the future of Palestine/Israel have not been reconciled over the past four decades.

ISRAELI PERSPECTIVES. In dealing with its neighbors, Israel considers two elements of the local landscape especially meaningful:

- Israel is a very small country (smaller than New Hampshire), with a Jewish majority, surrounded by a region of hostile Muslim Arabs encompassing more than 25 million square kilometers (10 million square miles). Israel's people live extremely close to international borders, making them vulnerable to attack.
- Palestine is divided into three narrow, roughly parallel physical regions (Figure 6-51):
 - A coastal plain along the Mediterranean Sea
 - A series of hills reaching elevations above 1,000 meters (3,300 feet)
 - The Jordan River valley, much of which is below sea level

The UN plan for the partition of Palestine in 1947 (as modified by the armistice ending the 1948–1949 war) allocated most of the coastal plain to Israel, whereas Jordan took most of the hills between the coastal plain and the Jordan River valley, a region generally called the West Bank (of the Jordan River). Farther north, Israel's territory extended eastward to the Jordan River valley, but Syria controlled the highlands east of the valley, known as the Golan Heights.

Jordan and Syria used the hills between 1948 and 1967 as staging areas to attack Israeli settlements on the adjacent coastal plain and in the Jordan River valley. Israel captured these highlands during the 1967 war to stop attacks on the lowland population concentrations. Israel still has military control over the Golan Heights and West Bank a generation later, yet attacks by Palestinians against Israeli citizens have continued.

Israeli Jews were divided for many years between those who wished to retain the disputed territories and those who wished to make compromises with the Palestinians. In recent years, a large majority of Israelis have supported construction of a barrier to deter Palestinian attacks (refer to the Sustainability and Inequality in Our Global Village box).

PALESTINIAN PERSPECTIVES. Five groups of people consider themselves Palestinians:

- People living in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem territories captured by Israel in 1967
- Citizens of Israel who are Muslims rather than Jews
- People who fled from Israel to other countries after the 1948–1949 war
- People who fled from the West Bank or Gaza to other countries after the 1967 Six-Day War
- Citizens of other countries, especially Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, who identify themselves as Palestinians

The Palestinian fight against Israel was coordinated by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), under the longtime leadership of Yassir Arafat, until his death in 2004. Israel has permitted the organization of a limited form of government in much of the West Bank and Gaza, called the Palestinian Authority, but Palestinians are not satisfied with either the territory or the power they have received thus far.

The Palestinians have been divided by sharp differences, reflected in a struggle for power between the Fatah and Hamas parties. Some Palestinians, especially those aligned with the Fatah Party, are willing to recognize the state of Israel with its Jewish majority in exchange for return of all territory taken by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War. Other Palestinians, especially those aligned with the Hamas Party, do not recognize the right of Israel to exist

▼ **FIGURE 6-51 ISRAEL/PALESTINE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY** The physical geography of Israel/Palestine consists of narrow coastal lowlands and interior highlands interrupted by the Jordan River valley.



and want to continue fighting for control of the entire territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The United States, European countries, and Israel consider Hamas to be a terrorist organization.

After capturing the West Bank from Jordan in 1967, Israel permitted Jewish settlers to construct more than 100 settlements in the territory (refer to Figure 6-51 in the Sustainability and Inequality in our Global Village feature). Some Israelis built settlements in the West Bank because they regarded the territory as an integral part of the biblical Jewish homeland, known as Judea and Samaria. Others migrated

to the settlements because of a shortage of affordable housing inside Israel's pre-1967 borders. Jewish settlers comprise about 10 percent of the West Bank population, and Palestinians see their immigration as a hostile act. To protect the settlers, Israel has military control over most of the West Bank.

Pause and Reflect 6.4.4

What is the difference in elevation between Hebron (the largest city in the West Bank) and Tel Aviv (the largest city in Israel)?

SUSTAINABILITY AND INEQUALITY IN OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE

West Bank Barrier: Security Fence or Segregation Wall

Constructing a barrier to keep out the unwanted is one of the oldest of geographic tools. The United States is using this tool today, building a fence along the border with Mexico (refer to Figure 3-39 in Chapter 3).

To deter Palestinian suicide bombers from crossing into Israel, the Israeli government has constructed barriers along the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The West Bank barrier is especially controversial because it places on Israel's side around 10 percent of the land, home to between 10,000 and 50,000 Palestinians,

according to various sources (Figure 6-52).

According to Israel's government, the routes of the barrier were selected for two technical reasons:

- The area had to be wide enough to make construction of a barrier 60-meters (200 feet) wide feasible.
- High ground was placed on the Israeli side.

Critics charge that the circuitous route was chosen to encompass most of the 327,000 Israelis living

in West Bank settlements that most other countries consider illegal.

Naming the structure is controversial. Israel calls the barrier a "security fence," and Palestinians call it a "racial segregation wall." Neutral sources call it a "separation barrier."

The Israel Supreme Court has twice declared portions of the route illegal because Palestinian rights were violated. The barrier made daily life unsustainable for some Palestinians: They could no longer reach their fields, water sources, and places of work.



▲ FIGURE 6-52 WEST BANK SEPARATION BARRIER (left) Route of the barrier. (right) The barrier separating Palestinian land (foreground) from Jewish settlement near Jerusalem (rear).

KEY ISSUE 2

Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?

- International Migration of Ethnicities
- Internal Migration of African Americans
- Segregation by Ethnicity and Race

Learning Outcome 7.2.1

Describe the patterns of forced and voluntary migration of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans to the United States.

The clustering of ethnicities within the United States is partly a function of the same process that helps geographers to explain the distribution of other cultural factors, such as language and religion—namely migration. In Chapter 3, migration was divided into international (voluntary or forced) and internal (interregional and intraregional). The distribution of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans demonstrates all of these migration patterns.

International Migration of Ethnicities

Most African Americans are descended from Africans forced to migrate to the Western Hemisphere as slaves during the eighteenth century. Most Asian Americans and Hispanics are descended from voluntary immigrants to the United States during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, although some felt compelled for political reasons to come to the United States.

FORCED MIGRATION FROM AFRICA

Slavery is a system whereby one person owns another person as a piece of property and can force that slave to work for the owner's benefit. The first Africans brought to the American colonies as slaves arrived at Jamestown, Virginia, on a Dutch ship in 1619 (Figure 7-12). During the eighteenth century, the British shipped about 400,000 Africans to the 13 colonies that later formed the United States. In 1808 the United States banned bringing in additional Africans as slaves, but an estimated 250,000 were illegally imported during the next half-century.

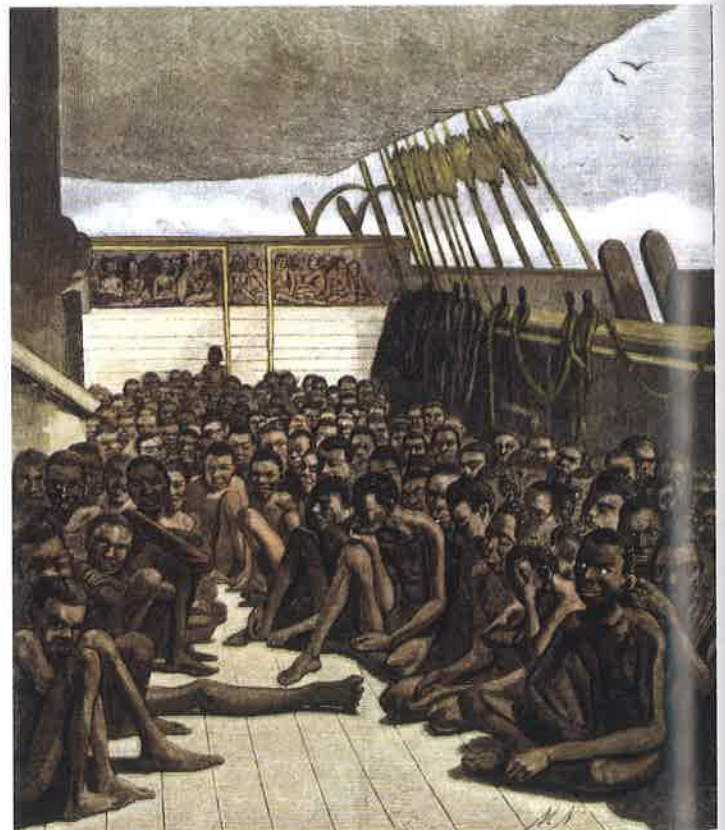
Slavery was widespread during the time of the Roman Empire, about 2,000 years ago. During the Middle Ages,

slavery was replaced in Europe by a feudal system, in which laborers working the land (known as serfs) were bound to the land and not free to migrate elsewhere. Serfs had to turn over a portion of their crops to the lord and provide other services, as demanded by the lord.

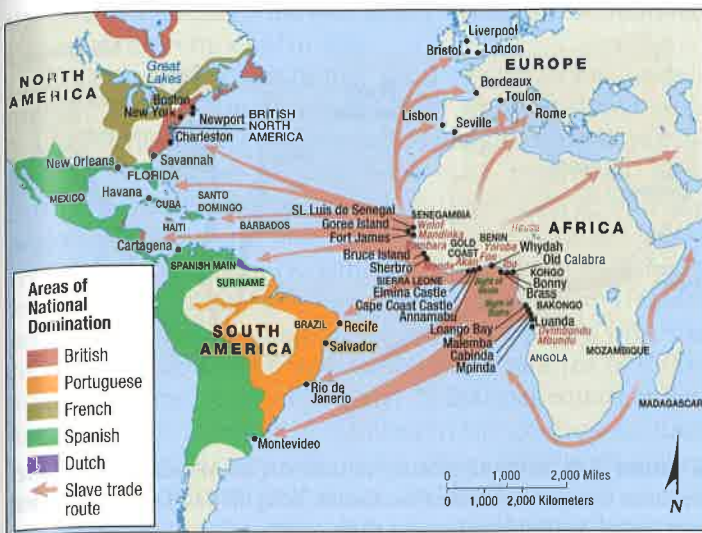
Although slavery was rare in Europe, Europeans were responsible for diffusing the practice to the Western Hemisphere. Europeans who owned large plantations in the Americas turned to African slaves as an abundant source of labor that cost less than paying wages to other Europeans.

At the height of the slave trade between 1710 and 1810, at least 10 million Africans were uprooted from their homes and sent on European ships to the Western Hemisphere for sale in the slave markets. During that period, the British and Portuguese each shipped about 2 million slaves to the Western Hemisphere, with most of the British slaves going to Caribbean islands and the Portuguese slaves to Brazil.

The forced migration began when people living along the east and west coasts of Africa, taking advantage of their superior weapons, captured members of other groups living farther inland and sold the captives to Europeans. Europeans in turn shipped the captured Africans to the Americas, selling them as slaves either on consignment or through auctions. The Spanish and Portuguese first participated in the slave trade in the early sixteenth century, and the British, Dutch, and French joined in during the next century.



▲ **FIGURE 7-12 SLAVE SHIP** This drawing made around 1845 for a French magazine shows the high density and poor conditions of Africans transported to the Western Hemisphere to become slaves.



▲ **FIGURE 7-13 ORIGIN AND DESTINATION OF SLAVES** Most slaves were transported across the Atlantic from West Africa to the Americas.

Different European countries operated in various regions of Africa, each sending slaves to different destinations in the Americas (Figure 7-13). At the height of the eighteenth-century slave demand, a number of European countries adopted the **triangular slave trade**, an efficient triangular trading pattern (Figure 7-14).

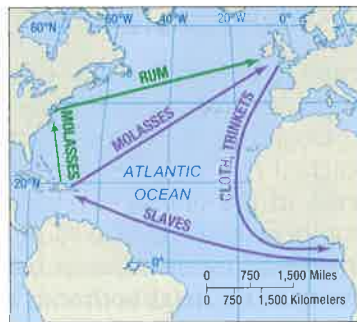
The large-scale forced migration of Africans caused them unimaginable hardship, separating families and destroying villages. Traders generally seized the stronger and younger villagers, who could be sold as slaves for the highest price. The Africans were packed onto ships at extremely high density, kept in chains, and provided with minimal food and sanitary facilities. Approximately one-fourth died crossing the Atlantic.

In the 13 colonies that later formed the United States, most of the large plantations in need of labor were located in the South, primarily those growing cotton as well as tobacco. Consequently, nearly all Africans shipped to the 13 colonies ended up in the Southeast.

Attitudes toward slavery dominated U.S. politics during the nineteenth century. During the early 1800s, when new states were carved out of western territory, anti-slavery northeastern states and pro-slavery southeastern states

► **FIGURE 7-14 TRIANGULAR SLAVE TRADE**

- Ships left Europe for Africa with cloth and other trade goods, used to buy the slaves.
- They then transported slaves and gold from Africa to the Western Hemisphere, primarily to the Caribbean islands.
- To complete the triangle, the same ships then carried sugar and molasses from the Caribbean to Europe.



- Some ships added another step, making a rectangular trading pattern, in which molasses was carried from the Caribbean to the North American colonies and rum from the colonies to Europe.

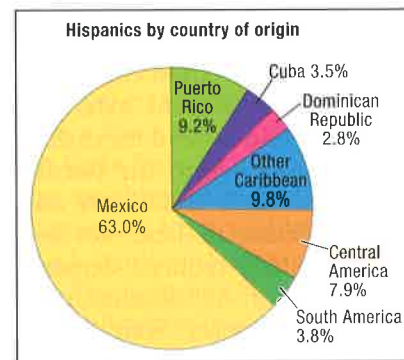
bitterly debated whether to permit slavery in the new states. The Civil War (1861–1865) was fought to prevent 11 pro-slavery Southern states from seceding from the Union. In 1863, during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves in the 11 Confederate states. The Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution, adopted 8 months after the South surrendered, outlawed slavery.

VOLUNTARY MIGRATION FROM LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA

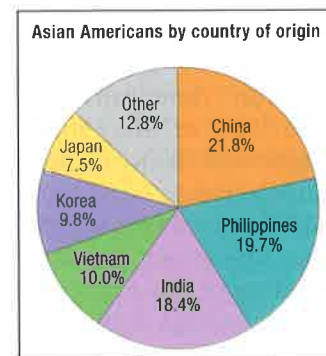
Until the late twentieth century, quotas limited the number of people who could immigrate to the United States from Latin America and Asia, as discussed in Chapter 3. After the immigration laws were changed during the 1960s and 1970s, the population of Hispanics and Asian Americans in the United States increased rapidly. Initially, most Hispanics and Asian Americans were recent immigrants who came to the United States in search of work, but in the twenty-first century most Americans who identify themselves as Hispanics or Asian Americans are children or grandchildren of immigrants.

The rapid growth of Hispanics in the United States beginning in the 1970s was fueled primarily by immigration from Mexico and Puerto Rico (Figure 7-15).

Chinese comprise the largest share of Asian Americans, followed by Indians, Filipinos, Koreans, and Vietnamese (Figure 7-16). Most Asian Americans are either immigrants who arrived in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries or their offspring.



◀ **FIGURE 7-15 HISPANICS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN** Mexicans comprise nearly two-thirds of Hispanics in the United States.



◀ **FIGURE 7-16 ASIAN AMERICANS BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN** Chinese, Filipinos, and Indians comprise one-fifth each of Asian Americans in the United States.

Segregation by Ethnicity and Race

Learning Outcome 7.2.3

Explain the laws once used to segregate races in the United States and South Africa.

In explaining spatial regularities, geographers look for patterns of spatial interaction. A distinctive feature of ethnic relations in the United States and South Africa has been the strong discouragement of spatial interaction—in the past through legal means and today through cultural preferences or discrimination.

UNITED STATES: "SEPARATE BUT EQUAL"

The U.S. Supreme Court in 1896 upheld a Louisiana law that required black and white passengers to ride in separate railway cars. In *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Supreme Court stated that Louisiana's law was constitutional because it provided separate, but equal, treatment of blacks and whites, and equality did not mean that whites had to mix socially with blacks.

SEGREGATION LAWS. Once the Supreme Court permitted "separate but equal" treatment of the races, southern states enacted a comprehensive set of laws to segregate blacks from whites as much as possible (Figure 7-21). These were called "Jim Crow" laws, named for a nineteenth-century song-and-dance act that depicted blacks offensively. Blacks had to sit in the backs of buses, and shops, restaurants, and hotels could choose to serve only whites. Separate schools were established for blacks and whites. This was equal, after all, white southerners argued, because the bus got blacks sitting in the rear to the destination at the same time as the whites in the front, some commercial

▼ **FIGURE 7-21 SEGREGATION IN THE UNITED STATES** Until the 1960s in the U.S. South, whites and blacks had to use separate drinking fountains, as well as separate restrooms, bus seats, hotel rooms, and other public facilities.



establishments served only blacks, and all of the schools had teachers and classrooms.

Throughout the country, not just in the South, house deeds contained restrictive covenants that prevented the owners from selling to blacks, as well as to Roman Catholics or Jews in some places. Restrictive covenants kept blacks from moving into an all-white neighborhood. And because schools, especially at the elementary level, were located to serve individual neighborhoods, most were segregated in practice, even if not by legal mandate.

U.S. segregation laws were eliminated during the 1950s and 1960s. The landmark Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, in 1954, found that having separate schools for blacks and whites was unconstitutional because no matter how equivalent the facilities, racial separation branded minority children as inferior and therefore was inherently unequal. A year later, the Supreme Court further ruled that schools had to be desegregated "with all deliberate speed."

CULTURAL SEGREGATION. Two major museums standing one block apart in Detroit illustrate the challenges of integrating ethnicities in the United States. The financially strapped city of Detroit has had difficulty adequately funding both museums:

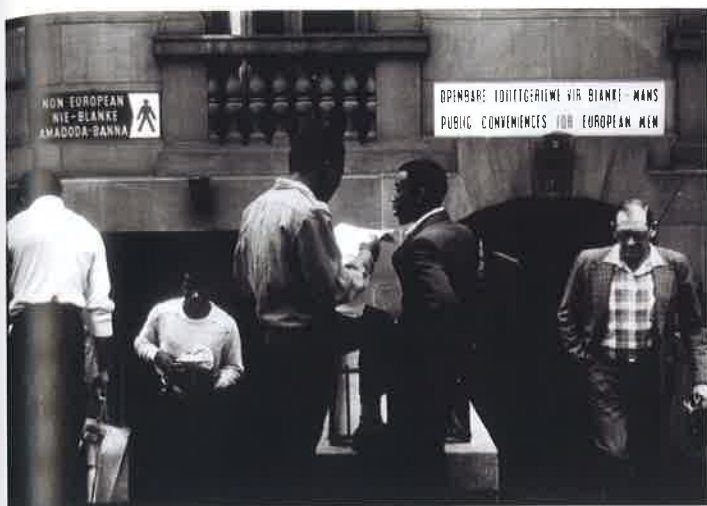
- The Detroit Institute of Arts contains a major collection of paintings by medieval European artists, many of which were donated a century ago by rich Detroit industrialists. The 80-year-old building, the country's fifth-largest art museum, looks like a Greek temple.
- The Museum of African American History, founded in 1965, houses the country's largest exhibit devoted to the history and culture of African Americans. The current building, opened in 1997, is designed to reflect the cultural heritage of Africa, including an entry with large bronze doors topped by 14-karat gold-plated decorative masks. The exhibits are primarily photographs, videos, and text.

Pause and Reflect 7.2.3

Which Detroit museum should take priority for the city's limited investment funds—the Detroit Institute of Arts or the Museum of African American History?

SOUTH AFRICA: APARTHEID

Discrimination by race reached its peak in the late twentieth century in South Africa. While the United States was repealing laws that segregated people by race, South Africa was enacting them. The cornerstone of the South African policy was the creation of a legal system called apartheid (Figure 7-22). **Apartheid** was the physical separation of different races into different geographic areas. Although South Africa's apartheid laws were repealed during the 1990s, it will take many years to erase the impact of those policies.



▲ **FIGURE 7-22 APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA** South Africa's apartheid laws were designed to spatially segregate races as much as possible. This 1984 image of City Hall in Johannesburg shows that whites and nonwhites were required to use separate bathrooms.

In South Africa, under apartheid, a newborn baby was classified as being one of four races—black, white, colored (mixed white and black), or Asian. Under apartheid, each of the four races had a different legal status in South Africa. The apartheid laws determined where different races could live, attend school, work, shop, and own land. Blacks were restricted to certain occupations and were paid far lower wages than were whites for similar work. Blacks could not vote or run for political office in national elections. The apartheid system was created by descendants of whites who arrived in South Africa from the Netherlands in 1652 and settled in Cape Town, at the southern tip of the territory. They were known either as Boers, from the Dutch word for “farmer,” or Afrikaners, from the word “Afrikaans,” the name of their language, which is a dialect of Dutch.

The British seized the Dutch colony in 1795 and controlled South Africa's government until 1948, when the Afrikaner-dominated Nationalist Party won elections. The Afrikaners gained power at a time when colonial rule was being replaced in the rest of Africa by a collection of independent states run by the local black population. The Afrikaners vowed to resist pressures to turn over South Africa's government to blacks, and the Nationalist Party created the apartheid laws in the next few years to perpetuate white dominance of the country. To ensure geographic isolation of different races, the South African government designated 10 so-called homelands for blacks (Figure 7-23). The white minority government expected every black to become a citizen of one of the homelands and to move there. More than 99 percent of the population in the 10 homelands was black.

The white-dominated government of South Africa repealed the apartheid laws in 1991. The principal anti-apartheid organization, the African National Congress, was legalized, and its leader, Nelson Mandela, was released



▲ **FIGURE 7-23 SOUTH AFRICA'S APARTHEID HOMELANDS** As part of its apartheid system, the government of South Africa designated 10 homelands, expecting that ultimately every black would become a citizen of one of them. South Africa declared 4 of these homelands to be independent states, but no other country recognized the action. With the end of apartheid and the election of a black majority government, the homelands were abolished, and South Africa was reorganized into 9 provinces.

from jail after more than 27 years of imprisonment. When all South Africans were permitted to vote in national elections for the first time, in 1994, Mandela was overwhelmingly elected the country's first black president.

Now that South Africa's apartheid laws have been dismantled and the country is governed by its black majority, other countries have reestablished economic and cultural ties. However, the legacy of apartheid will linger for many years: South Africa's blacks have achieved political equality, but they are much poorer than white South Africans. Average income among white South Africans is about 10 times higher than that of blacks.

CHECK-IN: KEY ISSUE 2

Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?

- ✓ **Ancestors of African Americans immigrated to the United States primarily as slaves.**
- ✓ **Large numbers of African Americans migrated from the South to the North and West during the early twentieth century.**
- ✓ **In the United States, as well as in South Africa, segregation of races was legal for much of the twentieth century.**

Ethnic Competition

Learning Outcome 7.3.2

Identify and describe the principal ethnicities in Lebanon and Sri Lanka.

We have already seen in this chapter that identification with ethnicity and race can lead to discrimination and segregation. Confusion between ethnicity and nationality can lead to violent conflicts. Lebanon and Sri Lanka are examples of countries that have not successfully integrated diverse ethnicities.

ETHNIC COMPETITION IN LEBANON

Lebanon has 4 million people in an area of 10,000 square kilometers (4,000 square miles), a bit smaller and more populous than Connecticut. Once known as a financial and recreational center in the Middle East, Lebanon has been severely damaged by fighting among ethnicities since the 1970s.

Lebanon is divided between around 60 percent Muslims and 40 percent Christians (Figure 7-27). The precise distribution of religions in Lebanon is unknown because no census has been taken since 1932:

- **Christians.** Lebanon's most numerous Christian sect is Maronite, which split from the Roman Catholic Church in the seventh century. Maronites, ruled by the patriarch



▲ **FIGURE 7-27 ETHNICITIES IN LEBANON** Christians dominate in the south and the northwest, Sunni Muslims in the far north, Shiite Muslims in the northeast and south, and Druze in the south-central and southeast.

of Antioch, perform the liturgy in the ancient Syrian language. The second-largest Christian sect is Greek Orthodox, the Orthodox church that uses a Byzantine liturgy.

- **Muslims.** Most of Lebanon's Muslims belong to one of several Shiite sects. Sunnis, who are much more numerous than Shiites in the world, account for a minority of Lebanon's Muslims. Lebanon also has an important community of Druze, who were once considered to have a separate religion but now consider themselves Muslim. Many Druze rituals are kept secret from outsiders.

Lebanon's diversity may appear to be religious rather than ethnic. But most of Lebanon's Christians consider themselves ethnically descended from the ancient Phoenicians who once occupied present-day Lebanon. In this way, Lebanon's Christians differentiate themselves from the country's Muslims, who are considered Arabs.

When Lebanon became independent in 1943, the constitution required that each religion be represented in the Chamber of Deputies according to its percentage in the 1932 census. By unwritten convention, the president of Lebanon was a Maronite Christian, the premier a Sunni Muslim, the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies a Shiite Muslim, and the foreign minister a Greek Orthodox Christian. Other cabinet members and civil servants were similarly apportioned among the various faiths.

Lebanon's religious groups have tended to live in different regions of the country. Maronites are concentrated in the west-central part, Sunnis in the northwest, and Shiites in the south and east. Beirut, the capital and largest city, has been divided between a Christian eastern zone and a Muslim western zone. During a civil war between 1975 and 1990, each religious group formed a private army or militia to guard its territory. The territory controlled by each militia changed according to results of battles with other religious groups.

When the governmental system was created, Christians constituted a majority and controlled the country's main businesses, but as Muslims became the majority, they demanded political and economic equality. The agreement ending the civil war in 1990 gave each religion one-half of the 128 seats in Parliament. Israel and the United States sent troops into Lebanon at various points in failed efforts to restore peace (Figure 7-28). The United States pulled out after 241 U.S. marines died in their barracks from a truck bomb in 1983. Lebanon was left under the control of neighboring Syria, which had a historical claim over the territory until it, too, was forced to withdraw its troops in 2005.

Pause and Reflect 7.3.2

What country borders Lebanon on the south?
What conflict has been ongoing in that country, as described in Chapter 6?

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN SRI LANKA

An island country of 19 million inhabitants off the Indian coast, Sri Lanka is inhabited by three principal ethnicities



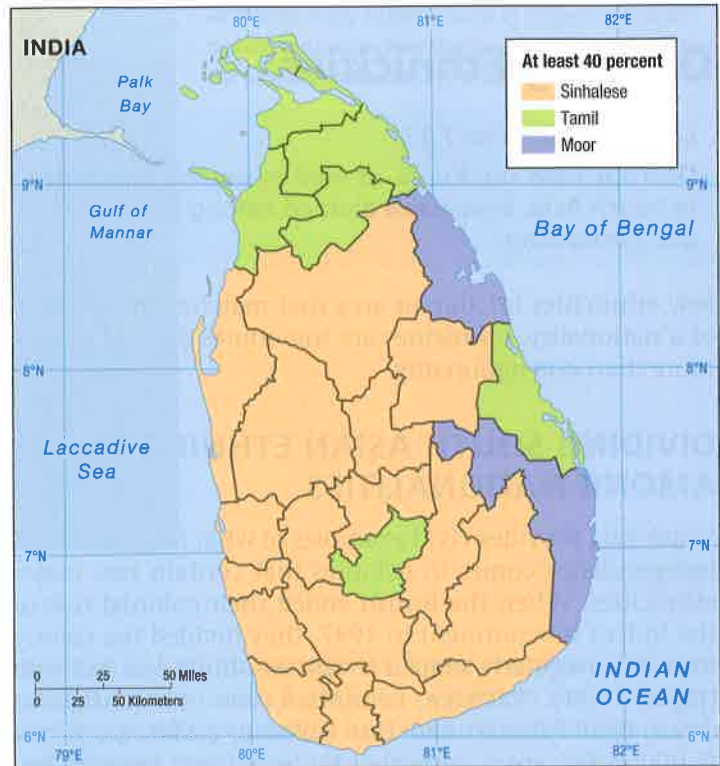
▲ **FIGURE 7-28 ETHNIC CONFLICT IN LEBANON** U.S. Marines patrol the streets of Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983.

known as Sinhalese, Tamil, and Moors (Figure 7-29). War between the Sinhalese and Tamil erupted in 1983 and continued until 2009. During that period, 80,000 died in the conflict between the two ethnicities:

- **Sinhalese**, who comprise 74 percent of Sri Lanka's population, migrated from northern India in the fifth century B.C., occupying the southern two-thirds of the island. Three hundred years later, the Sinhalese were converted to Buddhism, and Sri Lanka became one of that religion's world centers. Sinhalese is an Indo-European language, in the Indo-Iranian branch.
- **Tamils**, who comprise 16 percent of Sri Lanka's population, migrated across the narrow 80-kilometer-wide (50-mile-wide) Palk Strait from India beginning in the third century B.C. and occupied the northern part of the island. Tamils are Hindus, and the Tamil language, in the Dravidian family, is also spoken by 60 million people in India.
- **Moors**, who comprise 10 percent of Sri Lanka's population, are ethnic Arabs, descended from traders from Southwest Asia who settled in Sri Lanka beginning in the eighth century A.D. Moors adhere to Islam but speak either Tamil or Sinhalese.

The dispute between Sri Lanka's two largest ethnicities extends back more than 2,000 years but was suppressed during 300 years of European control. Since the country gained independence in 1948, Sinhalese have dominated the government, military, and most of the commerce. Tamils feel that they suffer from discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese-dominated government and have received support for a rebellion that began in 1983 from Tamils living in other countries.

The long war between the ethnicities ended in 2009, with the defeat of the Tamils (Figure 7-30). With their defeat, the Tamils fear that the future of Sri Lanka as a



▲ **FIGURE 7-29 ETHNICITIES IN SRI LANKA**

The Sinhalese are Buddhists who speak an Indo-European language, whereas the Tamils are Hindus who speak a Dravidian language.

multinational state is jeopardized. Back in 1956, Sinhalese leaders made Buddhism the sole official religion and Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka. The Tamils fear that their military defeat jeopardizes their ethnic identity again.

▼ **FIGURE 7-30 ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA** Tamils demonstrating in Switzerland for international support a few days before losing the war in 2009.



Dividing Ethnicities

Learning Outcome 7.3.3

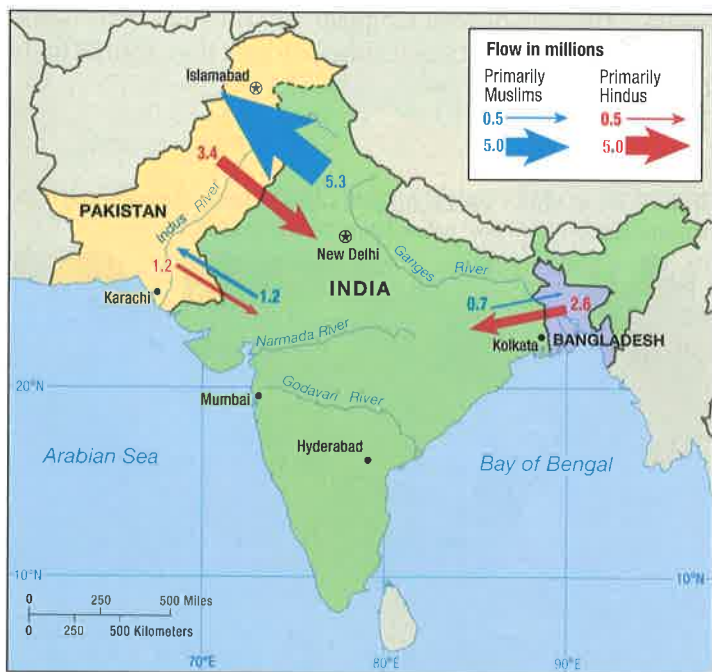
Describe how the Kurds, as well as several ethnicities in South Asia, have been divided among more than one nationality.

Few ethnicities inhabit an area that matches the territory of a nationality. Ethnicities are sometimes divided among more than one nationality.

DIVIDING SOUTH ASIAN ETHNICITIES AMONG NATIONALITIES

South Asia provides vivid examples of what happens when independence comes to colonies that contain two major ethnicities. When the British ended their colonial rule of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, they divided the colony into two irregularly shaped countries—India and Pakistan (Figure 7-31). Pakistan comprised two noncontiguous areas, West Pakistan and East Pakistan, 1,600 kilometers (1,000 miles) apart, separated by India. East Pakistan became the independent state of Bangladesh in 1971. An eastern region of India was also practically cut off from the rest of the country, attached only by a narrow corridor north of Bangladesh that is less than 13 kilometers (8 miles) wide in some places.

The basis for separating West and East Pakistan from India was ethnicity. The people living in the two areas of



▲ **FIGURE 7-31 ETHNIC DIVISION OF SOUTH ASIA** In 1947, British India was partitioned into two independent states, India and Pakistan, which resulted in the migration of an estimated 17 million people. The creation of Pakistan as two territories nearly 1,600 kilometers (1,000 miles) apart proved unstable, and in 1971 East Pakistan became the independent country of Bangladesh.

Pakistan were predominantly Muslim; those in India were predominantly Hindu. Antagonism between the two religious groups was so great that the British decided to place the Hindus and Muslims in separate states. Hinduism has become a great source of national unity in India. In modern India, with its hundreds of languages and ethnic groups, Hinduism has become the cultural trait shared by the largest percentage of the population.

Muslims have long fought with Hindus for control of territory, especially in South Asia. After the British took over India in the early 1800s, a three-way struggle began, with the Hindus and Muslims fighting each other as well as the British rulers. Mahatma Gandhi, the leading Hindu advocate of nonviolence and reconciliation with Muslims, was assassinated in 1948, ending the possibility of creating a single state in which Muslims and Hindus could live together peacefully.

The partition of South Asia into two states resulted in massive migration because the two boundaries did not correspond precisely to the territory inhabited by the two ethnicities. Approximately 17 million people caught on the wrong side of a boundary felt compelled to migrate during the late 1940s. Some 6 million Muslims moved from India to West Pakistan and about 1 million from India to East Pakistan. Hindus who migrated to India included approximately 6 million from West Pakistan and 3.5 million from East Pakistan. As they attempted to reach the other side of the new border, Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in India were killed by people from the rival religion. Extremists attacked small groups of refugees traveling by road and halted trains to massacre the passengers.

Pakistan and India never agreed on the location of the boundary separating the two countries in the northern region of Kashmir (Figure 7-32). Since 1972, the two countries have maintained a “line of control” through the region, with Pakistan administering the northwestern portion and India the southeastern portion. Muslims, who comprise a majority in both portions, have fought a guerrilla war to secure reunification of Kashmir, either as part of Pakistan or as an independent country. India blames Pakistan for the unrest and vows to retain its portion of Kashmir. Pakistan argues that Kashmiris on both sides of the border should choose their own future in a vote, confident that the majority Muslim population would break away from India.



▲ **FIGURE 7-32 KASHMIR** India and Pakistan dispute the location of their border.



◀ **FIGURE 7-33 KURDS** Kurds in northern Iraq hold burning torches to celebrate their new year, which they call Newroz, on the first day of spring.

India's religious unrest is further complicated by the presence of 25 million Sikhs, who have long resented that they were not given their own independent country when India was partitioned (see Chapter 6). Although they constitute only 2 percent of India's total population, Sikhs comprise a majority in the Indian state of Punjab, situated south of Kashmir along the border with Pakistan. Sikh extremists have fought for more control over the Punjab or even complete independence from India.

DIVIDING THE KURDS AMONG NATIONALITIES

A prominent example of an ethnicity divided among several countries in western Asia is the Kurds, who live in the Caucasus Mountains (Figure 7-33). The Kurds are Sunni Muslims who speak a language in the Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European and have distinctive literature, dress, and other cultural traditions.

When the victorious European allies carved up the Ottoman Empire after World War I, they created an independent state of Kurdistan to the south and west of Van Gölü (Lake Van) under the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres. Before the treaty was ratified, however, the Turks, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal (later known as Kemal Atatürk), fought successfully to expand the territory under their control beyond the small area the allies had allocated to them. The Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 established the modern state of Turkey, with boundaries nearly identical to the current ones. Kurdistan became part of Turkey and disappeared as an independent state.

Today the 30 million Kurds are split among several countries; 14 million live in eastern Turkey, 5 million in northern Iraq, 4 million in western Iran, 2 million in Syria,

and the rest in other countries. Kurds comprise 19 percent of the population in Turkey, 16 percent in Iraq, 9 percent in Syria, and 6 percent in Iran (refer ahead to Figure 7-34 on the next page).

To foster the development of Turkish nationalism, the Turks have tried repeatedly to suppress Kurdish culture. Use of the Kurdish language was illegal in Turkey until 1991, and laws banning its use in broadcasts and classrooms remain in force. Kurdish nationalists, for their part, have waged a guerrilla war since 1984 against the Turkish army. Kurds in other countries have fared just as poorly as those in Turkey. Iran's Kurds secured an independent republic in 1946, but it lasted less than a year. Iraq's Kurds have made several unsuccessful attempts to gain independence, including in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1970s.

A few days after Iraq was defeated in the 1991 Gulf War, the country's Kurds launched another unsuccessful rebellion. The United States and its allies decided not to resume their recently concluded fight against Iraq on behalf of the Kurdish rebels, but after the revolt was crushed, they sent troops to protect the Kurds from further attacks by the Iraqi army. After the United States attacked Iraq and deposed Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iraqi Kurds achieved even more autonomy, but still not independence. Thus, despite their numbers, the Kurds are an ethnicity with no corresponding Kurdish state today. Instead, they are forced to live under the control of the region's more powerful nationalities.

Pause and Reflect 7.3.3

Refer ahead to Figure 7-34 on the next page. What is the largest ethnicity in Pakistan?

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN WESTERN ASIA

Learning Outcome 7.3.4

Identify and describe the principal ethnicities in western Asia.

The lack of correspondence between the territory occupied by ethnicities and nationalities is especially severe in western Asia. Four nationalities in the region—Iraqi, Iranian, Afghan, and Pakistani—encompass dozens of ethnicities, most of whom inhabit more than one of the region's countries (Figure 7-34):

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN IRAQ. Approximately three-fourths of Iraqis are Arabs, and one-sixth are Kurds. The Arab population is divided among Muslim branches, with two-thirds Shiite and one-third Sunni.

The United States led an attack against Iraq in 2003 that resulted in the removal and death of the country's longtime president, Saddam Hussein. U.S. officials justified removing Hussein because he ran a brutal dictatorship, created weapons of mass destruction, and allegedly had close links with terrorists (see Chapter 8).

Having invaded Iraq and removed Hussein from power, the United States expected an enthusiastic welcome from the Iraqi nation. Instead, the United States became embroiled in a complex and violent struggle among ethnic groups:

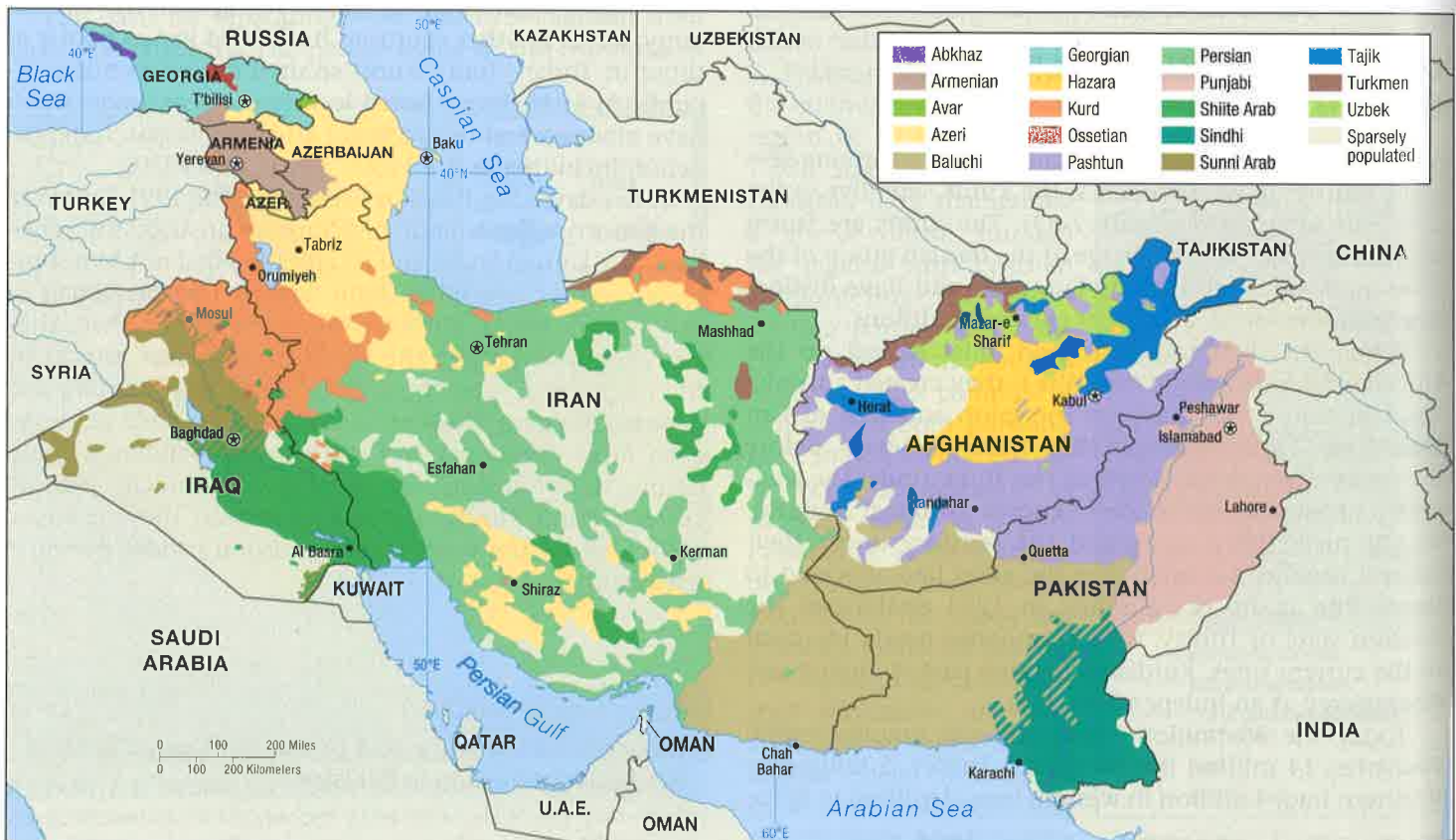
- Kurds welcomed the United States because they gained more security and autonomy than they had had under Hussein.
- Sunni Muslim Arabs opposed the U.S.-led attack because they feared loss of power and privilege given to them by Hussein, who was a Sunni.
- Shiite Muslim Arabs also opposed the U.S. presence. Although they had been treated poorly by Hussein and controlled Iraq's post-Hussein government, Shiites shared a long-standing hostility toward the United States with their neighbors in Shiite-controlled Iran.

Iraq's principal ethnic groups are split into regions, with Kurds in the north, Sunnis in the center, and Shiites in the south.

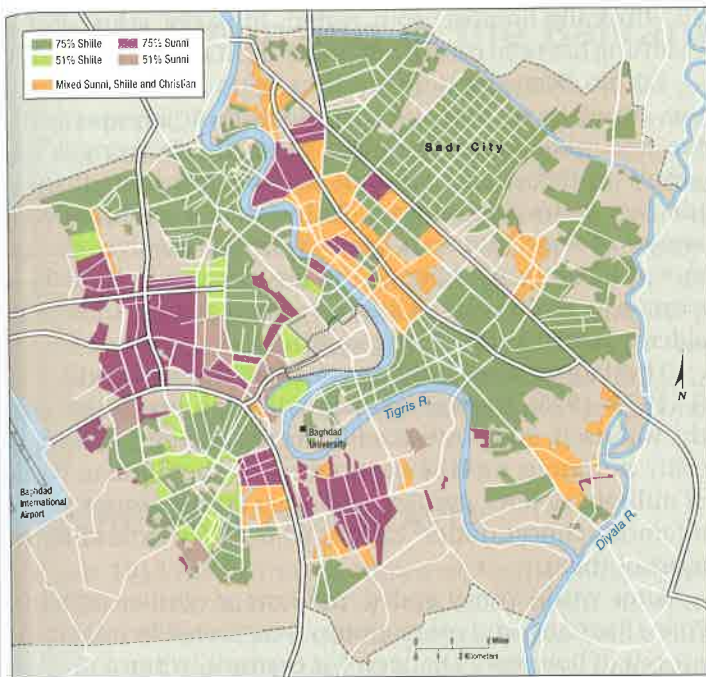
The capital, Baghdad, where one-fourth of the Iraqi people live, has some neighborhoods where virtually all residents are of one ethnicity, but most areas are mixed. In many of these historically mixed neighborhoods, the minority ethnicity has been forced to move away (Figure 7-35).

The major ethnicities are divided into numerous tribes and clans (Figure 7-36). Most Iraqis actually have stronger loyalty to a tribe or clan than to the nationality or a major ethnicity.

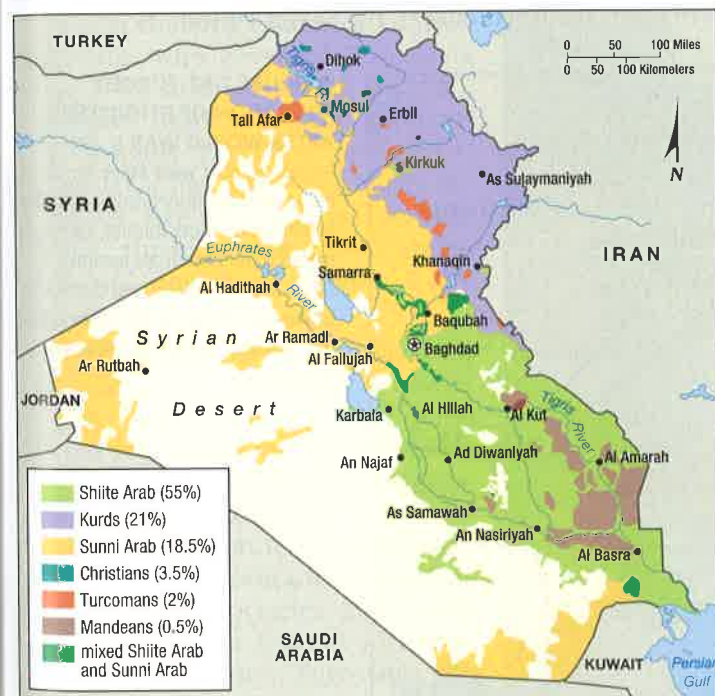
ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN IRAN. The most numerous ethnicity is Persian, but Azeri and Baluchi represent important minorities. Persians constitute the world's largest ethnic group that adheres to Shiite Islam. Persians



▲ FIGURE 7-34 ETHNICITIES IN WESTERN ASIA The complex distribution of ethnicities and nationalities across western Asia is a major source of conflict.



▲ FIGURE 7-35 ETHNICITIES IN BAGHDAD Baghdad contains a mix of Sunnis, Shiites, and other groups. Many neighborhoods were traditionally mixed, but in recent years the minority group has been forced to migrate.



▲ FIGURE 7-36 ETHNICITIES IN IRAQ Iraq is home to around 150 distinct tribes. Some of the larger ones are shown on the map.

are believed to be descendants of the Indo-European tribes that began migrating from Central Asia into what is now Iran several thousand years ago (see Chapter 5). The Persian Empire extended from present-day Iran west as far as Egypt during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. After the Muslim army conquered Persia in the seventh century, most Persians converted to Sunni Islam. The conversion to Shiite Islam came primarily in the fifteenth century.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN AFGHANISTAN. The most numerous ethnicities in Afghanistan are Pashtun, Tajik, and Hazara. The current unrest among Afghanistan's ethnicities dates from 1979, with the start of a rebellion by several ethnic groups against the government, which was being defended by more than 100,000 troops from the Soviet Union. Unable to subdue the rebellion, the Soviet Union withdrew its troops in 1989, and the Soviet-installed government in Afghanistan collapsed in 1992.

After several years of infighting among ethnicities, a faction of the Pashtun called the Taliban gained control over most of the country in 1995. The Taliban imposed very harsh, strict laws on Afghanistan, according to Islamic values as the Taliban interpreted them (see Chapter 6). The United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and overthrew the Taliban-led government because it was harboring terrorists (see Chapter 8). Removal of the Taliban unleashed a new struggle for control of Afghanistan among the country's many ethnic groups, including the Taliban.

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN PAKISTAN. The most numerous ethnicity in Pakistan is Punjabi, but the border area with Afghanistan is principally Baluchi and Pashtun. The Punjabi have been the most numerous ethnicity since ancient times in what is now Pakistan. As with the neighboring Pashtun, the Punjabi converted to Islam after they were conquered by the Muslim army in the seventh century. The Punjabi remained Sunni Muslims rather than convert to Shiite Islam like their neighbors the Pashtun, who comprise Pakistan's second-largest ethnicity, especially along the border with Afghanistan. Fighting between Pakistan's army and supporters of the Taliban forced Pakistanis to leave their homes and move into camps, where they were fed by international relief organizations.

Pause and Reflect 7.3.4

How do the ethnic complexities of western Asia make it difficult to set up stable democratic governments?

CHECK-IN: KEY ISSUE 3

Why Do Conflicts Arise among Ethnicities?

- ✓ Nationality is identity with a group of people who share legal attachment and personal allegiance to a particular country.
- ✓ Countries such as Lebanon and Sri Lanka have difficulty peacefully combining ethnicities into one nationality.
- ✓ Some ethnicities, such as the Kurds, are divided among more than one nationality.
- ✓ Lack of correspondence between ethnicities and nationalities is especially severe in western Asia.

KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Ethnicities Engage in Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide?

- Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans
- Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide in Sub-Saharan Africa

Learning Outcome 7.4.1

Describe the process of ethnic cleansing.

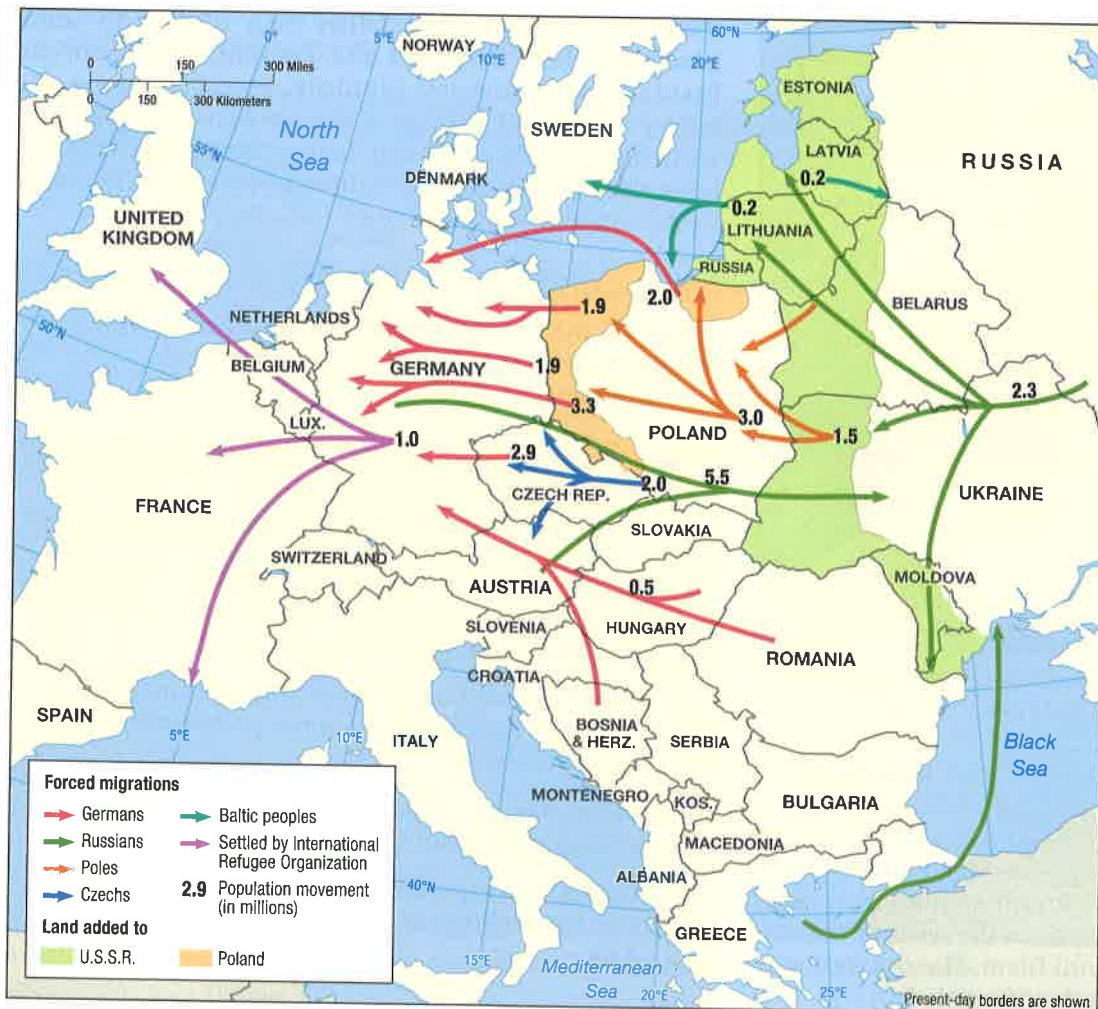
Throughout history, ethnic groups have been forced to flee from other ethnic groups' more powerful armies. **Ethnic cleansing** is a process in which a more powerful ethnic group forcibly removes a less powerful one in order to create

an ethnically homogeneous region. In recent years, ethnic cleansing has been carried out primarily in Europe and Africa.

Ethnic cleansing is undertaken to rid an area of an entire ethnicity so that the surviving ethnic group can be the sole inhabitants. The point of ethnic cleansing is not simply to defeat an enemy or to subjugate them, as was the case in traditional wars. Rather than a clash between armies of male soldiers, ethnic cleansing involves the removal of every member of the less powerful ethnicity—women as well as men, children as well as adults, the frail elderly as well as the strong youth.

The largest forced migration came during World War II (1939–1945) because of events leading up to the war, the war itself, and postwar adjustments (Figure 7-37). Especially notorious was the deportation by the German Nazis of millions of Jews, gypsies, and other ethnic groups to the infamous concentration camps, where they exterminated most of them.

After World War II ended, millions of ethnic Germans, Poles, Russians, and other groups were forced to migrate as a result of boundary changes. For example, when a portion of eastern Germany became part of Poland, the Germans living in the region were forced to move west to Germany and Poles were allowed to move into the area. Similarly, Poles were forced to move when the eastern portion of Poland was turned over to the Soviet Union.



◀ **FIGURE 7-37 FORCED MIGRATION OF ETHNICITIES AFTER WORLD WAR II**

The largest number were Poles forced to move from territory occupied by the Soviet Union (now Russia), Germans forced to migrate from territory taken over by Poland and the Soviet Union, and Russians forced to return to the Soviet Union from Western Europe.

Ethnic Cleansing in the Balkans

The scale of forced migration during World War II has not been repeated, but in recent years ethnic cleansing within Europe has occurred in portions of former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia & Herzegovina and Kosovo. Ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia is part of a complex pattern of ethnic diversity in the region of southeastern Europe known as the Balkan Peninsula. The region, about the size of Texas, is named for the Balkan Mountains (known in Slavic languages as Stara Planina), which extend east-west across the region. The Balkans includes Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania, as well as several countries that once comprised Yugoslavia.

MULTIETHNIC YUGOSLAVIA

In June 1914 the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serb who sought independence for Bosnia. The incident sparked World War I. After World War I, the allies created a new country, Yugoslavia, to unite several Balkan ethnicities that spoke similar South Slavic languages (Figure 7-38). The prefix “Yugo” in the country’s name derives from the Slavic word for “south.”

Under the long leadership of Josip Broz Tito, who governed Yugoslavia from 1953 until his death in 1980, Yugoslavs liked to repeat a refrain that roughly translates as follows: “Yugoslavia has seven neighbors, six republics, five nationalities, four languages, three religions, two alphabets, and one dinar” (Figure 7-39). Specifically:

- Seven neighbors of Yugoslavia included three longtime democracies (Austria, Greece, and Italy) and four states then governed by Communists (Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania). The diversity of neighbors reflected Yugoslavia’s strategic location between the Western democracies and Communist Eastern Europe. Although a socialist country, Yugoslavia was militarily neutral after it had been

expelled in 1948 from the Soviet-dominated military alliance for being too independent minded. Yugoslavia’s Communists permitted more communication and interaction with Western democracies than did other Eastern European countries.

- Six republics within Yugoslavia—Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia—had more autonomy from the national government to run their own affairs than was the case in other Eastern European countries.
- Five of the republics were named for the country’s five recognized ethnic groups—Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrans, Serbs, and Slovenes. Bosnia & Herzegovina contained a mix of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims.
- Four official languages were recognized—Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Slovene. Montenegrans spoke Serbian.

Pause and Reflect 7.4.1

What is an example of another country that is inhabited primarily by people of Slavic ethnicity?





▲ **FIGURE 7-39 YUGOSLAVIA UNTIL ITS BREAKUP IN 1992** Yugoslavia comprised six republics (plus Kosovo and Vojvodina, autonomous regions within the Republic of Serbia).

- Three major religions included Roman Catholic in the north, Orthodox in the east, and Islam in the south. Croats and Slovenes were predominantly Roman Catholic, Serbs and Macedonians predominantly Orthodox, and Bosnians and Montenegrins predominantly Muslim.
- Two of the four official languages—Croatian and Slovene—were written in the Roman alphabet; Macedonian and Serbian were written in Cyrillic. Most linguists outside Yugoslavia considered Serbian and Croatian to be the same language except with different alphabets.
- One, the refrain concluded, was the dinar, the national unit of currency. This meant that despite cultural diversity, common economic interests kept Yugoslavia's nationalities unified.

The Balkan Peninsula, a complex assemblage of ethnicities, has long been a hotbed of unrest (Figure 7-40). Northern portions were incorporated into the Austro-Hungarian Empire; southern portions were ruled by the Ottomans. Austria-Hungary extended its rule farther south in 1878 to include Bosnia & Herzegovina, where the majority of the people had been converted to Islam by the Ottomans.

The creation of Yugoslavia brought stability that lasted for most of the twentieth century. Old animosities among ethnic groups were submerged, and younger people began to identify themselves as Yugoslavs rather than as Serbs, Croats, or Montenegrins.

Rivalries among ethnicities resurfaced in Yugoslavia during the 1980s after Tito's death, leading to the breakup of the country. Breaking away to form independent countries were Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, and Slovenia during the 1990s and Montenegro in 2006. The breakup left Serbia standing on its own as well.

As long as Yugoslavia comprised one country, ethnic groups were not especially troubled by the division of the country into six republics. But when Yugoslavia's republics were transformed from local government units into five separate countries, ethnicities fought to redefine the boundaries. Not only did the boundaries of Yugoslavia's six republics fail to match the territory occupied by the five major nationalities, but the country contained other important ethnic groups that had not received official recognition as nationalities.



▲ **FIGURE 7-40 THE BALKANS IN 1914**

At the outbreak of World War I, Austria-Hungary controlled the northern part of the region, including all or part of Croatia, Slovenia, and Romania. The Ottoman Empire controlled some of the south, although during the nineteenth century it had lost control of Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Romania, and Serbia.

ETHNIC CLEANSING IN BOSNIA

Learning Outcome 7.4.2

Explain the concept of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans.

The creation of a viable nationality has proved especially difficult in the case of Bosnia & Herzegovina. At the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia, the population of Bosnia & Herzegovina was 48 percent Bosnian Muslims, 37 percent Serbs, and 14 percent Croats. Bosnian Muslim was considered an ethnicity rather than a nationality. Rather than live in an independent multiethnic state with a Muslim plurality, Bosnia & Herzegovina's Serbs and Croats fought to unite the portions of the republic that they inhabited with Serbia and Croatia, respectively.

To strengthen their cases for breaking away from Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbs and Croats engaged in ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims (Figure 7-42). Ethnic cleansing ensured that areas did not merely have majorities of Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats but were ethnically homogeneous and therefore better candidates for union with Serbia and Croatia. Ethnic cleansing by Bosnian Serbs against Bosnian Muslims was especially severe because much of the territory inhabited by Bosnian Serbs was separated from Serbia by areas with Bosnian Muslim majorities. By ethnically cleansing Bosnian Muslims from intervening areas, Bosnian Serbs created one continuous area of Bosnian Serb domination rather than several discontinuous ones.

Accords reached in Dayton, Ohio, in 1996 by leaders of the various ethnicities divided Bosnia & Herzegovina into three regions, one each dominated, respectively, by the Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs. The Bosnian Croat and Muslim regions were combined into a federation, with some cooperation between the two groups, but the Serb region has operated with almost complete independence in all but name from the others. In recognition of the success of their ethnic cleansing, Bosnian Serbs received nearly half of the country, although they comprised one-third of the population, and Bosnian Croats got one-fourth of the land, although they comprised one-sixth of the population. Bosnian Muslims, one-half of the population before the ethnic cleansing, got one-fourth of the land (Figure 7-43).

Pause and Reflect 7.4.2

In which regions within Bosnia & Herzegovina did Serbs gain most of their territory?

ETHNIC CLEANSING IN KOSOVO

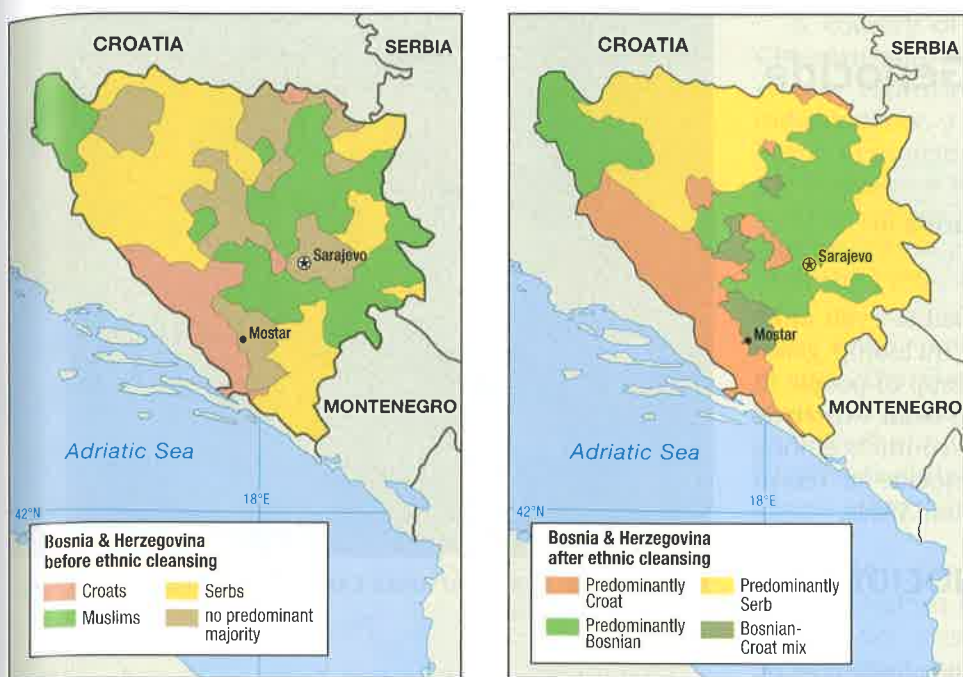
After the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia remained a multiethnic country. Particularly troubling was the province of Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians comprised 90 percent of



▲ FIGURE 7-42 ETHNIC CLEANSING IN BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (top) The Stari Most (old bridge), built by the Turks in 1566 across the Neretva River, was an important symbol and tourist attraction in the city of Mostar. (middle) The bridge was blown up by Croats in 1993, in an attempt to demoralize Bosnian Muslims as part of ethnic cleansing (bottom). With the end of the war in Bosnia & Herzegovina, the bridge was rebuilt in 2004.

the population. Under Tito, ethnic Albanians in Kosovo received administrative autonomy and national identity.

Serbia had a historical claim to Kosovo, having controlled it between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Serbs fought an important—though losing—battle in



◀ **FIGURE 7-43 ETHNICITIES IN BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA BEFORE AND AFTER ETHNIC CLEANSING** The territory occupied by Bosnian Muslims (left) was considerably reduced as a result of ethnic cleansing by Bosnian Serbs and Croats (right).

Kosovo against the Ottoman Empire in 1389. In recognition of its role in forming the Serb ethnicity, Serbia was given control of Kosovo when Yugoslavia was created in the early twentieth century.

With the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia took direct control of Kosovo and launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing of the Albanian majority. The process of ethnic cleansing involved four steps:

1. Move a large amount of military equipment and personnel into a village that has no strategic value (see the Contemporary Geographic Tools feature).
2. Round up all the people in the village. In Bosnia, Serbs often segregated men from women, children, and old people. The men were placed in detention camps or “disappeared”—undoubtedly killed—and the others were forced to leave the village. In Kosovo, men were herded together with the others rather than killed.
3. Force the people to leave the village. The villagers were typically forced into a convoy—some in the vehicles, others on foot—heading for the Albanian border.
4. Destroy the vacated village by setting it on fire.

At its peak in 1999, Serb ethnic cleansing had forced 750,000 of Kosovo’s 2 million ethnic Albanian residents from their homes, mostly to camps in Albania. Outraged by the ethnic cleansing, the United States and Western European countries, operating through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), launched an air attack against Serbia. The bombing campaign ended when Serbia agreed to withdraw all of its soldiers and police from

Kosovo. Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008. Around 60 countries, including the United States, recognize Kosovo as an independent country, but Serbia and Russia oppose it.

BALKANIZATION

A century ago, the term **Balkanized** was widely used to describe a small geographic area that could not successfully be organized into one or more stable states because it was inhabited by many ethnicities with complex, long-standing antagonisms toward each other. World leaders at the time regarded **Balkanization**—the process by which a state breaks down through conflicts among its ethnicities—as a threat to peace throughout the world, not just in a small area. They were right: Balkanization led directly to World War I because the various nationalities in the Balkans dragged into the war the larger powers with which they had alliances.

After two world wars and the rise and fall of communism during the twentieth century, the Balkans have once again become Balkanized in the twenty-first century. Will the United States, Europe, and Russia once again be drawn reluctantly into conflict through entangled alliances in the Balkans? If peace comes to the Balkans, it will be because in a tragic way ethnic cleansing “worked.” Millions of people were rounded up and killed or forced to migrate because they constituted ethnic minorities. Ethnic homogeneity may be the price of peace in areas that once were multiethnic.

Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide in Sub-Saharan Africa

Learning Outcome 7.4.3

Identify the principal episodes of genocide in northeastern Africa.

In some places, ethnic competition has led to even more extreme actions than ethnic cleansing, including genocide. **Genocide** is the mass killing of a group of people in an attempt to eliminate the entire group from existence. Sub-Saharan Africa has been plagued by conflicts among ethnic groups that have resulted in genocide in recent years, especially in northeastern and central Africa.

ETHNIC CLEANSING AND GENOCIDE IN NORTHEASTERN AFRICA

In northeastern Africa, three distinct ethnic conflicts in recent years have taken place in Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia.

SUDAN. In Sudan, several civil wars have raged since the 1980s between the Arab-Muslim dominated government in the north and other ethnicities in the south, west, and east (Figure 7-44):

- **South Sudan.** Black Christian and animist ethnicities resisted government attempts to convert the country from a multiethnic society to one nationality tied to Muslim traditions. A north–south war between 1983 and 2005 resulted in the death of an estimated 1.9 million Sudanese, mostly civilians. The war ended with the



▲ **FIGURE 7-45 DARFUR REFUGEE CAMP** Refugees from Darfur are living in a camp in Adré, Chad.

establishment of Southern Sudan as an independent state in 2011. However, fighting resumed as the governments of Sudan and South Sudan could not agree on boundaries between the two countries.

- **Darfur.** As Sudan's religion-based civil war was winding down, an ethnic war erupted in Sudan's westernmost region, Darfur. Resenting discrimination and neglect by the national government, Darfur's black Africans launched a rebellion in 2003. Marauding Arab nomads, known as janjaweed, with the support of the Sudanese government, crushed Darfur's black population, made up mainly of settled farmers; 480,000 have been killed and another 2.8 million have been living in dire conditions in refugee camps in the harsh desert environment of Darfur (Figure 7-45). Actions of Sudan's government troops, including mass murders and rape of civilians, have been termed genocide by many other countries, and charges of war crimes have been filed against Sudan's leaders.
- **Eastern front.** Ethnicities in the east fought Sudanese government forces between 2004 and 2006, with the support of neighboring Eritrea. At issue was disbursement of profits from oil.



▲ **FIGURE 7-44 SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN** South Sudan became an independent country in 2011.

ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA. Eritrea, located along the Red Sea, became an Italian colony in 1890. Ethiopia, an independent country for more than 2,000 years, was captured by Italy during the 1930s. After World War II, Ethiopia regained its independence, and the United Nations awarded Eritrea to Ethiopia (Figure 7-46). The United Nations expected Ethiopia to permit Eritrea considerable authority to run its own affairs, but Ethiopia dissolved the Eritrean legislature and banned the use of Tigrinya, Eritrea's major local language. The Eritreans rebelled, beginning a 30-year fight for independence (1961–1991). During this civil war, an estimated 665,000 Eritrean refugees fled to neighboring Sudan.



▲ **FIGURE 7-46 HORN OF AFRICA** Eritrea broke away from Ethiopia to become an independent country in the early 1990s. Somalia is divided into several territories controlled by various ethnic groups.

Eritrean rebels defeated the Ethiopian army in 1991, and 2 years later Eritrea became an independent state. But war between Ethiopia and Eritrea flared up again in 1998 because of disputes over the location of the border. Eritrea justified its claim through a 1900 treaty between Ethiopia and Italy, which then controlled Eritrea, but Ethiopia cited a 1902 treaty with Italy. Ethiopia defeated Eritrea in 2000 and took possession of the disputed areas. Battles along the border have continued (Figure 7-47).

▼ **FIGURE 7-47 ERITREA–ETHIOPIA BORDER** The border between Eritrea (background) and Ethiopia (foreground) is unmarked here.



A country of 5 million people split evenly between Christian and Muslim, Eritrea has two principal ethnic groups: Tigrinya and Tigre. At least in the first years of independence, a strong sense of national identity united Eritrea's ethnicities as a result of shared experiences during the 30-year war to break free of Ethiopia.

Even with the loss of Eritrea, Ethiopia remained a complex multiethnic state. From the late nineteenth century until the 1990s, Ethiopia was controlled by the Amharas, who are Christians. After the government defeat in the early 1990s, power passed to a combination of ethnic groups. The Oromo, who are Muslim fundamentalists from the south, are the largest ethnicity in Ethiopia, at 34 percent of the population. The Amhara, who comprise 27 percent of the population, had banned the use of languages other than Amharic, including Oromo.

SOMALIA. On the surface, Somalia should face fewer ethnic divisions than its neighbors in the Horn of Africa. Somalis are overwhelmingly Sunni Muslims and speak Somali. Most share a sense that Somalia is a nation-state, with a national history and culture.

Somalia's 9 million inhabitants are divided among several ethnic groups known as clans, each of which is divided into a large number of subclans. Traditionally, the major clans occupied different portions of Somalia. In 1991, a dictatorship that ran the country collapsed, and various clans and subclans claimed control over portions of the country. Clans have declared independent states of Somaliland in the north, Puntland in the northeast, Galmudug in the center, and Southwestern Somalia in the south.

The United States sent several thousand troops to Somalia in 1992, after an estimated 300,000 people, mostly women and children, died from famine and from warfare among clans. The purpose of the mission was to protect delivery of food by international relief organizations to starving Somali refugees and to reduce the number of weapons in the hands of the clan and subclan armies. After peace talks among the clans collapsed in 1994, U.S. troops withdrew.

Islamist militias took control of much of Somalia between 2004 and 2006. Neighboring countries were drawn into the conflict, Eritrea on the side of the Islamists and Ethiopia against them. Claiming that some of the leaders were terrorists, the United States also opposed the Islamists and launched air strikes in 2007. The fighting generated several hundred thousand refugees. Islamist militias withdrew from most of Somalia in 2006 but have since returned and again control much of the country. The ongoing conflict worsened the impact of a recent drought (see the Sustainability and Inequality in Our Global Village feature and Figure 7-48).

Pause and Reflect 7.4.3

Which countries with ethnic conflicts described in Key Issues 3 and 4 have had U.S. troops sent to try to restore the peace?

ETHNIC CLEANSING AND GENOCIDE IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Learning Outcome 7.4.4

Identify the principal episodes of genocide in central Africa.

Long-standing conflicts between two ethnic groups, the Hutus and Tutsis, lie at the heart of a series of wars in central Africa. The two ethnicities speak the same language, hold similar beliefs, and practice similar social customs, and intermarriage has lessened the physical differences between the two groups. Yet Hutus and Tutsis have engaged in large-scale ethnic cleansing and genocide:

- Hutus were settled farmers, growing crops in the fertile hills and valleys of present-day Rwanda and Burundi, known as the Great Lakes region of central Africa.
- Tutsis were cattle herders who migrated to present-day Rwanda and Burundi from the Rift Valley of western Kenya beginning 400 years ago.

Relations between settled farmers and herders are often uneasy; this is also an element of the ethnic cleansing in Darfur described earlier in the chapter.

RWANDA. Genocide in Rwanda in 1994 involved Hutus murdering hundreds of thousands of Tutsis (as well as Hutus sympathetic to the Tutsis). The genocide began after an airplane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi—both Hutus—was shot down by a surface-to-air missile. The attacker was never identified, but most international intelligence organizations—including those of the United States and France—concluded that it was a Hutu unhappy with the presidents' attempts to seek peace between Hutus and Tutsis.

Hutus constituted a majority of the population of Rwanda historically, but Tutsis controlled the kingdom of Rwanda for several hundred years and turned the Hutus into their serfs. Rwanda became a colony of Germany in 1899, and after the Germans were defeated in World War I, the League of Nations turned over control to Belgium. Belgian administrators permitted a few Tutsis to attend university and hold responsible government positions, while excluding the Hutus altogether. Separate identity cards were issued to the two ethnicities.

When Rwanda became an independent country in 1962, Hutus gained power and undertook ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Tutsis, many of whom fled to neighboring Uganda.

Descendants of the ethnically cleansed Tutsis invaded Rwanda in 1990. An agreement to share power was signed

SUSTAINABILITY AND INEQUALITY IN OUR GLOBAL VILLAGE

Ethnic Cleansing and Drought

More than 2 million Somalis—one-fourth of the country's population—are classified as refugees or internally displaced persons. As elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, continued fighting among ethnic groups and the absence of a strong national government able to maintain order have contributed to the large number of refugees.

Adding to the woes of the Somali people, the worst drought in 60 years hit the country in 2010 and 2011, especially in the south (Figure 7-48). It is impossible to count the number of Somalis forced to migrate because of famine rather than civil war; both factors probably affect most Somalis. Because of the civil war, much of the food and water sent by international relief organizations could not get through to the people in need. Improved weather in 2012 resulted in a larger harvest, and more supplies were reaching people.



▲ FIGURE 7-48 SOMALIA Somali victims of fighting and famine line up for food and medical assistance in 2011.

International organizations distributed seeds and dug irrigation canals to help in the longer term, but

a renewal of fighting or a bit less rainfall could push the country back into famine.



▲ **FIGURE 7-49 ETHNIC CLEANSING IN RWANDA** Hutu refugees in Congo.

in 1993, but after the assassination of the president in 1994, Hutus launched genocide against Tutsis, killing an estimated 800,000. The Hutu genocide ended after three months, with Tutsis gaining control of the country. Two million Hutu fled to neighboring countries in the ethnic cleansing that followed the Tutsi victory (Figure 7-49).

CONGO. The conflict between Hutus and Tutsis spilled into neighboring countries, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo. The region's largest and most populous country, the Congo is thought to have seen the world's deadliest war since the end of World War II in 1945. An estimated 5.4 million had died in Congo civil wars as of 2008, when the most heated fighting ceased.

Tutsis were instrumental in the successful overthrow of the Congo's longtime president, Joseph Mobutu, in 1997. Mobutu had amassed a several-billion-dollar personal fortune

from the sale of minerals while impoverishing the rest of the country. After succeeding Mobutu as president, Laurent Kabila relied heavily on Tutsis and permitted them to kill some of the Hutus who had been responsible for atrocities against Tutsis in the early 1990s. But Kabila soon split with the Tutsis, and the Tutsis once again found themselves offering support to rebels seeking to overthrow Congo's government.

Kabila turned for support to Hutus, as well as to Mayi Mayi, another ethnic group in the Congo that also hated Tutsis. Armies from Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and other neighboring countries came to Kabila's aid. Kabila was assassinated in 2001 and succeeded by his son, who negotiated an accord with rebels the following year. Despite the accord, conflict among the country's many ethnicities has continued, and casualties have mounted.

COLONIAL LEGACY. Ethnic conflict is widespread in Africa largely because the present-day boundaries of countries do not match the boundaries of ethnic groups (Figure 7-50). During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, European countries carved up the continent into a collection of colonies, with little regard for the distribution of ethnicities.

Traditionally, the most important unit of African society was the tribe rather than independent states with political and economic self-determination. Africa contains several thousand ethnicities (usually referred to as tribes) with a common sense of language, religion, and social customs (refer to Figure 5-18 for a map of African languages). The precise number of tribes is impossible to determine because boundaries separating them are not usually defined clearly. Further, it is hard to determine whether a particular group forms a distinct tribe or is part of a larger collection of similar groups.

When the European colonies in Africa became independent states, especially during the 1950s and 1960s, the boundaries of the new states typically matched the colonial administrative units imposed by the Europeans. As a result, some tribes were divided among more than one modern state, and others were grouped with dissimilar tribes.

Pause and Reflect 7.4.4

Referring to Figure 7-50, are there any countries in Africa where the boundaries match those of ethnicities?

CHECK-IN: KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Ethnicities Engage in Ethnic Cleansing?

- ✓ Ethnic cleansing is a process in which a more powerful ethnic group forcibly removes a less powerful one in order to create an ethnically homogeneous region.
- ✓ Genocide is the mass killing of a group of people in an attempt to eliminate the entire group from existence.



▲ **FIGURE 7-50 AFRICA'S MANY ETHNICITIES** The territory occupied by ethnic groups in Africa rarely matches the boundaries of countries.