

## UNIT 3

# + Cultural Patterns and Processes

**Chapter 6** *Cultural Landscapes, Patterns, and Diffusion*

**Chapter 7** *Historical and Contemporary Processes of Diffusion*

### Unit Overview

While some human attributes, such as hair color, are heavily influenced by biological inheritance, most are not. In general, how people think and act is shaped, formally and informally, by what they learn from other people. All of the practices, attitudes, and behaviors that people learn from others are part of their culture.

### *Behaviors People Share*

Areas where many people share an element of culture—such as speaking a particular language—form **cultural regions**. Geographers use maps, from small to large scale—to show the boundaries of these regions.

When people of different cultures meet, they sometimes have conflicts, but they always adjust to each other. For example, if they speak different languages, one group might adopt the other's language over time. Or people might blend the two languages to create a new one (creolized language). Improvements in transportation and communication have increased the interaction of cultures throughout history. Culture spreads (diffusion) as people move from one place to another and as people interact and learn from each other. In 1500, the region where most people spoke English was a small area on the northwest corner of Europe. Today, English is the most widely spoken language around the world.

### *Variations in Culture*

Culture changes over time and so do the spatial patterns and processes. Geographers use maps to show regions and spatial patterns, such as where specific languages are spoken. Additionally, they utilize various types of charts and diagrams to show relationships and changes among the elements of culture. For example, a tree diagram can show how several languages, including French and Spanish, are branches that diverge from a common ancestor, Latin.

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

PSO-3: Cultural practices vary across geographical locations because of physical geography and available resources.

IMP-3: The interaction of people contributes to the spread of cultural practices.

SPS-3: Cultural ideas, practices, and innovations change or disappear over time.

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

# CHAPTER 6

## Cultural Landscapes, Patterns, and Diffusion

### *Topics 3.1–3.4*

#### **Topic 3.1 Introduction to Culture**

*Learning Objective:* Define the characteristics, attitudes, and traits that influence geographers when they study culture. (PSO-3.A)

#### **Topic 3.2 Cultural Landscapes**

*Learning Objectives:* Describe the characteristics of cultural landscapes. (PSO-3.B)

Explain how landscape features and land and resource use reflect cultural beliefs and identities. (PSO-3.C)

#### **Topic 3.3 Cultural Patterns**

*Learning Objective:* Explain patterns and landscapers of language, religion, ethnicity, and gender. (PSO-3.D)

#### **Topic 3.4 Types of Diffusion**

*Learning Objective:* Define the types of diffusion. (IMP-3.A)

*The Buffalo was part of us, his flesh and blood being absorbed by us until it became our own flesh and blood. Our clothing, our tipis, everything we needed for life came from the buffalo's body. It was hard to say where the animals ended and the human began.*

— John (Fire) Lame Deer, *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions*, 1972



**Source:** Getty Images  
Diffusion and migration influence the cultural landscape of Chinatown in San Francisco. (See Topic 3.2 for characteristics of the cultural landscape.)



## Introduction to Culture

**Essential Question:** What are the characteristics, attitudes, and traits that influence geographers when they study culture?

To the Lakota, and other indigenous people on North America's Great Plains, the bison was an essential part of their culture (expressed in the quote on the previous page). The bison provided meat for nutrition, a hide for clothing and shelter, bones for tools, and fat for soap. The bison was also central to their religious beliefs. So, when European settlers hunted the bison nearly to extinction, Lakota culture suffered.

Culture is central to a society and the identity of its people, as well as its continued existence. Therefore, geographers study culture as a way to understand similarities and differences among societies across the world, and in some cases, to help preserve these societies.

### Analyzing Culture

All of a group's learned behaviors, actions, beliefs, and objects are a part of **culture**. It is a *visible* force seen in a group's actions, possessions, and influence on the landscape. For example, in a large city you can see people working in offices, factories, and stores, and living in high-rise apartments or suburban homes. You might observe them attending movies, concerts, or sporting events.

Culture is also an *invisible* force guiding people through shared belief systems, customs, and traditions. Culture is learned, in that it develops through experiences, and not merely transmitted through genetics. For example, many people in the United States have developed a strong sense of competitiveness in school and business, and believe that hard work is a key to success. These types of elements, visible and invisible, are **cultural traits**. A series of interrelated traits make up a **cultural complex**, such as the process of steps and acceptable behaviors related to greeting a person in different cultures. A single cultural artifact, such as an automobile, may represent many different values, beliefs, behaviors and traditions and be representative of a cultural complex.

Since culture is learned there are many ways that one generation passes its culture to the next. Children and adults learn traits three ways:

- imitation, as when learning a language by repeating sounds or behaviors from a person or television
- informal instruction, as when a parent reminds a child to say "please"
- formal instruction, as when students learn history in school

## CULTURAL COMPLEX OF THE AUTOMOBILE



The automobile provides much more than just transportation, as it reflects many values that are central to American culture.

### Origins of Culture

The area in which a unique culture or a specific trait develops is a **culture hearth**. Classical Greece was a culture hearth for democracy more than 2,000 years ago. New York City was a culture hearth for rap music in the 1970s. Geographers study how cultures develop in hearths and **diffuse**—or spread—to other places.

Geographers also study **taboos**, behaviors heavily discouraged by a culture. For example, many cultures have taboos against eating certain foods, such as pork or insects. What is considered taboo changes over time. In the United States, marriages between Protestants and Catholics were once taboo, but they are not widely opposed now.

### *Traditional, Folk, and Indigenous Cultures*

With the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, modern transportation and communication connected people as never before and led to extensive cultural mixing, especially as cities have grown. The world prior to this time was very different; however, remnants of the past are still evident in our modern cultures. Traditional, folk, and indigenous cultures share some important characteristics and are often grouped together, but they do have some subtle differences.

**Traditional Culture** Recently, the meanings of traditional, folk, and indigenous culture have begun to merge, causing geographers to debate when each should be used. Increasingly, the term **traditional culture** is used to encompass all three cultural designations. All three types share the function of passing down long-held beliefs, values, and practices and are generally resistant to rapid changes in their culture.

**Folk Culture** The beliefs and practices of small, homogenous groups of people, often living in rural areas that are relatively isolated and slow to change, are known as **folk cultures**. Like all cultures, they demonstrate the diverse ways that people have adapted to a physical environment. For example, people around the world learned to make shelters out of available resources, whether



it was snow or mud bricks or wood. However, people used similar resources such as wood differently. In Scandinavia, people used trees to build cabins. In the American Midwest, people processed trees into boards, built a frame, and attached the boards to it. Many traits of folk culture continue today. Corn was first grown in Mexico around 10,000 years ago, and it is still grown there today.

While many elements of folk culture exist side by side with modern culture, there are people whose societies have changed little, if at all, from long ago. These people practice traditional cultures, those which have not been affected by modern technology or influences. They often live in remote regions, such as some small tribes in the Amazon rainforest, and have scant knowledge of the outside world. As the lines continue blurring between cultural designations, the Amish of Pennsylvania are often referenced as both folk and traditional culture.

**Indigenous Culture** When members of an ethnic group reside in their ancestral lands, and typically possess unique cultural traits, such as speaking their own exclusive language, they are considered an **indigenous culture**. Some indigenous peoples have been displaced from their native lands, but still practice their indigenous culture. Native Americans in the United States, such as the Navajo, have kept indigenous cultural practices. First Nations of Canada, such as the Inuit, have also retained their indigenous culture.

### ***Globalization and Popular Culture***

As a result of the Industrial Revolution, improvements in transportation and communication have shortened the time required for movement, trade, or other forms of interaction between two places. This development, known as *space-time compression* (see Topics 1.4 and 3.6), has accelerated culture change around the world. In 1817, a freight shipment from Cincinnati needed 52 days to reach New York City. By 1850, because of canals and railroads, it took half that long. And by 1852, it took only 7 days. Today, an airplane flight takes only a few hours, and digital information takes seconds or less.

Similar change has occurred on the global scale. People travel freely across the world in a matter of hours, and communication has advanced to a point where people share information instantaneously across the globe. The increased global interaction has had a profound impact on cultures, from spreading English across the world to instant sharing of news, events and music.

**Globalization** specifically refers to the increased integration of the world economy since the 1970s. The process of intensified interaction among peoples, governments, and companies of different countries around the globe has had profound impacts on culture.

The culture of the United States is intertwined with globalization. Through the influence of its corporations, Hollywood movies, and government, the United States exerts widespread influence in other countries. But other countries also shape American culture. For example, in 2019, the National Basketball Association included players from 38 countries or territories.

When cultural traits—such as clothing, music, movies, and types of



businesses—spread quickly over a large area and are adopted by various groups, they become part of **popular culture**. Elements of popular culture often begin in urban areas and diffuse quickly through globalization processes such as the media and Internet.

These elements can quickly be adopted worldwide, making them part of **global culture**. People around the world follow European soccer, Indian Bollywood movies, and Japanese animation known as *anime*. With people in many nations wearing similar clothes, listening to similar music, and eating similar food, popular cultural traits often promote uniformity in beliefs, values, and the cultural landscape across many places. The **cultural landscape**, also known as the built environment (see Topic 3.2), is the modification of the environment by a group and is a visible reflection of that group's cultural beliefs and values.

### **Traditional Culture to Popular Culture**

Popular culture emphasizes trying what is new rather than preserving what is traditional. Many people, especially older generations or those who follow a folk culture, openly resist the adoption of popular cultural traits. They do this by preserving traditional languages, religions, values, and foods. While older generations often resist the adoption of popular culture, they seldom are successful in keeping their traditional cultures from changing, especially among the young people of their society.

One clash between popular and traditional culture is occurring in Brazil. As the population expands to the interior of the rain forest, many indigenous cultures, like the Yanomamo tribe, have more contact with outside groups. Remaining isolated by the forest is becoming increasingly difficult as many young people from the indigenous cultures become exposed to popular culture and begin to integrate into the larger Brazilian society. As the young people leave their communities, they are more likely to accept popular culture at the expense of their indigenous cultural heritage, which threatens the very existence of their folk culture.

Traditional culture typically exhibits *horizontal diversity*, meaning each traditional culture has its own customs and language that makes it distinct from other culture groups. Yet, people within each group are usually homogeneous, or very similar to each other.

By contrast, popular culture typically exhibits *vertical diversity*, meaning that modern urban societies are usually heterogeneous, or exhibiting differences, within the society and usually contain numerous multiethnic neighborhoods. However, on a global scale popular cultures are relatively similar with the same type of malls, shops, fast food, and clothing. Urban global culture centers are not identical, yet, global cities often do not have as much horizontal diversity across space as folk cultures.



COMPARING TRADITIONAL AND POPULAR CULTURE		
Trait	Traditional Culture	Popular or Global Culture
<b>Society</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rural and isolated location</li> <li>▪ Homogeneous and indigenous population</li> <li>▪ Most people speak an indigenous or ethnic local language</li> <li>▪ Horizontal diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urban and connected location</li> <li>▪ Diverse and multiethnic population</li> <li>▪ Many people speak a global language such as English or Arabic</li> <li>▪ Vertical diversity</li> </ul>
<b>Social Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasis on community and conformity</li> <li>▪ Families live close to each other</li> <li>▪ Well-defined gender roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emphasis on individualism and making choices</li> <li>▪ Dispersed families</li> <li>▪ Weakly defined gender roles</li> </ul>
<b>Diffusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relatively slow and limited</li> <li>▪ Primarily through relocation</li> <li>▪ Oral traditions and stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relatively rapid and extensive</li> <li>▪ Often hierarchical</li> <li>▪ Social media and mass media</li> </ul>
<b>Buildings and Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Materials produced locally, such as stone or grass</li> <li>▪ Built by community or owner</li> <li>▪ Similar style for community</li> <li>▪ Different between cultures</li> <li>▪ Traditional architecture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Materials produced in distant factories, such as steel or glass</li> <li>▪ Built by a business</li> <li>▪ Variety of architectural styles</li> <li>▪ Similar between cities</li> <li>▪ Postmodern / contemporary architecture</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Locally produced</li> <li>▪ Choices limited by tradition</li> <li>▪ Prepared by the family or community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Often imported</li> <li>▪ Wide range of choice</li> <li>▪ Purchased in restaurants</li> </ul>
<b>Spatial Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local and regional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ National and global</li> </ul>

### ***Artifacts, Mentifacts, and Sociofacts***

Whether a cultural attribute is considered traditional, folk, indigenous, or popular in nature, it is valuable to differentiate between elements of culture that can be seen and those that can not. There are **artifacts** that comprise the **material culture**, which consists of tangible things, or those that can be experienced by the senses. Art, clothing, food, music, sports, and housing types are all tangible elements of culture. Another element of the study of artifacts is understanding the techniques to use or build a specific artifact. Artifacts can be unique to a particular culture, or can be shared. For example, people of all cultures need to communicate through language, yet there are many groups that possess languages unique to their culture. The ability to read, write and understand the English language is an artifact of importance for much of popular global culture.

**Mentifacts** comprise a group's **nonmaterial culture** and consist of intangible concepts, or those not having a physical presence. Beliefs, values, practices, and aesthetics (pleasing in appearance) determine what a cultural group views as acceptable and desirable. Mentifacts can also be unique or shared. People of many cultures possess an belief in one or many deities, and often the deities are unique to that culture. The belief in a god is a mentifact—the religious building or symbols are artifacts.

Cultural groups also possess **sociofacts**, which are the ways people organize their society and relate to one another. Taken altogether, people tend to see the whole of their culture as greater than the sum of its individual parts. Sociofacts are embodied through families, governments, sports teams, religious organizations, education systems, and other social constructs. As with artifacts and mentifacts, sociofacts may also be unique or similar to other societies. Families are the foundations of most societies, yet what constitutes the structure of a family may vary widely between cultural groups. For example, Western cultures tend to view the nuclear family, consisting of the parents and their children as the basic family unit. By contrast, in many Western African cultures the norm is the extended family, consisting of several generations and other family members such as cousins living under one roof.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *What characteristics, attitudes, and traits influence geographers when they study culture?*

Influences on Geographers	Explanation of Influences on Geographers

### KEY TERMS

culture	globalization
cultural traits	popular culture
cultural complex	global culture
culture hearths	cultural landscape
diffuse	artifacts
taboos	material culture
traditional culture	mentifacts
folk culture	nonmaterial culture
indigenous culture	sociofacts



## Cultural Landscapes

**Essential Question:** What are the characteristics of cultural landscapes and how do those characteristics, land use, and resource use reflect cultural beliefs and identities?

**A**cross the world, the physical landscape changes with almost immeasurable variability. In the United States, the beaches of Florida, mountains of Colorado, and plains of Oklahoma are only a few of the many landscapes throughout the country. However, condos on the shores in Florida, ski lifts on the slopes in Colorado, and wheat fields in Oklahoma illustrate the numerous ways humans adjust and adapt to the environment.

While the modern cultural landscape is extremely diverse, it may also exhibit striking similarities from location to location. In the 1986 film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, the exploits of three teenagers skipping school took place in Chicago, Illinois, and its surrounding suburbs. However, a great deal of the filming took place in California—the suburbs of Long Beach and South Pasadena. Although separated by more than 2,000 miles, the suburbs in Illinois often look remarkably similar to those in California because of comparable incomes, a common American culture, similar architecture, related socioeconomic status, and other related factors. This phenomenon is known as **placelessness**, in which many modern cultural landscapes exhibit a great deal of homogeneity.

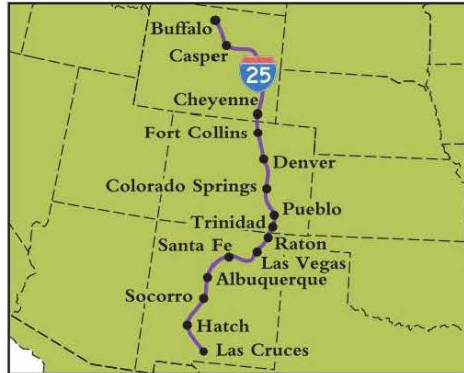
### Characteristics of Cultural Landscapes

The boundaries of a region reflect the human imprint on the environment. This is called the **cultural landscape**—the visible reflection of a culture—or the built environment. This concept encompasses any human alteration to the landscape, whether as obvious as a skyscraper or as subtle as a cleared field.

EXAMPLES OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPES		
Element	Area	Significance
<b>Protected Wilderness Area</b>	United States	Land set aside from development reflects the desire to preserve unique environments.
<b>Signage</b>	Quebec	Bilingual signs in French and English reflect the desire of French Canadians to retain their heritage.
<b>Schools</b>	Pakistan	Gender-segregated schools reflect attitudes toward male and female roles.
<b>Office Buildings</b>	Shanghai	Massive skyscrapers reflect economic power and a desire to have a prestigious location.

An observant traveler can notice changes in the cultural landscape while driving along a highway. For example, travelers on Interstate 25 going from Wyoming to New Mexico see a definite change, both in toponyms, or place names, and in the built environment. Names change from Anglo words to Spanish names. Wooden buildings are replaced by adobe buildings. Architectural styles shift from looking like those in England to looking like structures in Spain.

### CULTURAL CHANGE ALONG INTERSTATE 25



Buildings in Santa Fe, New Mexico, reflect a blend of the styles of Native American pueblos and Spanish missions. What do the map and photo tell you about the groups of people who lived in the I-25 region?

### *The Built Landscape*

The word environment is often used in reference to nature. Plants, the air, water, and animals are all part of the natural environment. Human geographers often refer to the **built environment**, by which they mean the physical artifacts that humans have created and that form part of the landscape. Buildings, roads, signs, and fences are examples of the built environment.

The architectural style of buildings varies from place to place. Think of typical homes and buildings in China, and then think of homes and buildings in Germany. These differences occur because people with different cultures who live in different physical landscapes construct the buildings, roads, and other elements to create a unique built environment. Anything built by humans is part of the cultural landscape.

### *Traditional vs. Postmodern Architecture*

**Traditional architecture** style reflects a local culture's history, beliefs, values, and community adaptations to the environment, and typically utilizes locally available materials. Examples would include Spanish adobe (mud) homes common in the southwestern United States or the colonial homes that were wood-constructed with a steep-pitched roof from New England. Many traditional architectural styles have now been adopted by popular culture and are mass produced within many communities, but they are still considered traditional architecture. Traditional architecture is usually built with the utility to people and community as a central focus.



**Postmodern architecture** developed after the 1960s. It is a movement away from boxy, mostly concrete or brick structures toward high rise structures made from large amounts of steel and glass siding. Most of the skyscrapers in the United States today are considered postmodern architectural style. Postmodernism has evolved to also include more use of curves, bright colors, and large glass atriums that bring light into spaces.

During the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a new style called **contemporary architecture** has emerged as an extension of postmodern architecture. This style uses multiple advances to create buildings that rotate, curve, and stretch the limits of size and height. Postmodernism and contemporary downtown skylines reflect businesses and corporations, and the towering height often is considered a reflection of a city's wealth and power. Both styles of architecture are known for the drama and large-scale beauty of the structures but often are criticized for a lack of an approachable human scale interaction. Both styles can create a steel and glass canyon feel when viewing from the street level. Postmodern and contemporary architecture are associated with globalized popular culture.



**Source:** Wikimedia Commons

Postmodern architecture of the 1983 Bank of America Center in Houston, Texas, (left) and contemporary architecture of the 2015 Shanghai Tower in China (right).

## **Ethnic Enclaves**

**Ethnicity** refers to membership within a group of people who have common experiences and share similar characteristics such as ancestry, language, customs, and history.

The neighborhood or subregional scale of the cultural landscape might include **ethnic enclaves**—clusters of people of the same culture—that are often surrounded by people of the dominant culture in the region. Ethnic enclaves sometimes reflect the desire of people to remain apart from the larger society. Other times, they reflect a dominant culture's desire to segregate a minority culture. Inside these enclaves are often stores and religious institutions that are supported by the ethnic group, signs in their traditional language, and architecture that reflects the group's place of origin. These enclaves can provide



a buffer against discrimination by the dominant culture or a network of people to help with employment and cultural integration. Examples would include “Chinatown” in San Francisco or “Little Mogadishu,” a Somali enclave in Minneapolis.

## **Geography of Gender**

The geography of gender has become an increasingly important topic for geographers in recent decades. In folk cultures, people often have clearly defined gender-specific roles. Women usually handle the domestic responsibilities, such as farming, educating children, and caring for family members. Men often work outside the house earning money and serving as leaders in religion and politics.

In popular culture, traditional gender-specific roles are challenged. Women in popular culture tend to have more access to education which leads to more opportunities to work outside of the home. In turn, this gives women more economic power and opportunities to serve as leaders.

The concept of gendered spaces or gendered landscapes clarifies the importance of cultural values on the distribution of power in societies. Throughout history and in many cultures, certain behaviors have been acceptable for only one gender, and often only in certain spaces. Men have commonly operated more freely than women in public spaces, while certain private spaces have been reserved for women. These differences might appear in the etiquette of visiting someone’s home. The host might welcome men in the public areas on the main level but feel comfortable only with women visiting the more private rooms on the upper level.

In Iran and India, some restaurants and parks are designated “men only” or “women only”. Many women view these “women only” areas as a safe place to gather and discuss issues, while others view them as discriminatory.

## **Cultural Regions**

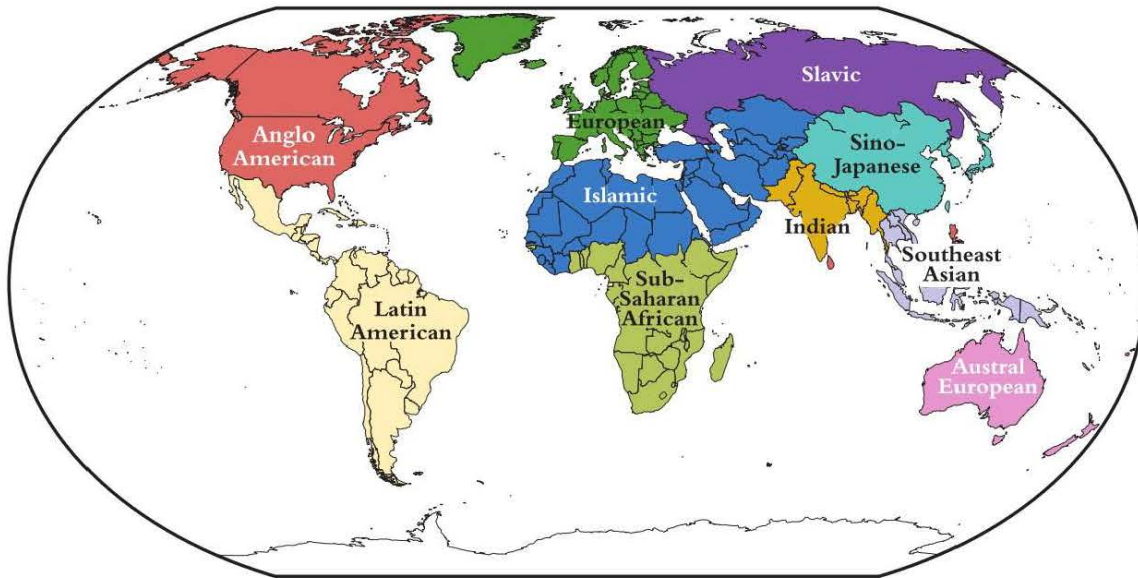
**Cultural regions** are usually determined based on characteristics such as religion, language, and ethnicity. Unless regions are defined by clear features, such as a mountain range, a transition zone often exists. In these zones, two cultures mix and people exhibit traits of both. Cultural regions do not always follow political borders. The border between the United States and Mexico clearly illustrates this pattern. People who live in border communities such as El Paso, Texas, are often fluent in both Spanish and English, and have cultural ties to both Mexico and the United States.

## **Realms**

Geographers also identify larger areas, **culture realms**, that include several regions. Cultures within a cultural realm have a few traits that they all share, such as language families, religious traditions, food preferences, architecture, or a shared history. Some geographers view realms simply as very large regions.



## TEN MAJOR CULTURE REALMS



Each realm is made up of several subregions that may have great diversity of culture, languages, religions, and traditions. Choose a culture realm from the map and describe the similarities and differences within that realm.

## Religion and the Landscape

Like all human activities, religion influences the organization and use of space. This appears in both how people think about natural features and what people build.

### *Sacred Space*

Many specific places and natural features have religious significance and are known as **sacred places** or sites. Some sites are sacred spaces where deities dwell. For example, followers of Shinto view certain mountains and rocks as the homes of spirits. Other sacred sites are important for what occurred there. Mt. Sinai is honored by Jews, Christians, and Muslims because they believe it is where God handed the Ten Commandments to Moses. Some entire cities have special religious meanings, such as Jerusalem (Israel), Mecca (Saudi Arabia), and Lhasa (Tibet).

### *Religious Cultural Landscapes*

Sacred physical features are important, but rare. More commonly, people express their beliefs through the cultural landscapes they create:

- Memorial spaces to the dead, such as cemeteries, are traditionally located close to worship spaces.
- Restaurants and food markets often cater to particular religious groups by offering religiously approved food.
- Signs often are written in the language and sometimes the alphabet that reflects the ethnic heritage of the group.

The most obvious example of the cultural landscape shaped by religion is in architecture. Each major faith provides examples of this.

**Christianity** Christian churches often feature a tall steeple topped with a cross, as Christians believe Jesus was resurrected after dying on a cross. Churches also demonstrate how the origin of the architectural style was often influenced by the environment. The hearths of that faith are more likely to resemble the original architecture. Christian churches closer to the eastern Mediterranean tend to have dome-shaped roofs that reflect the traditional style of architecture popular with the Romans, while churches in northern Europe have steep-pitched roofs designed for snow to slide off in the winter. This was an environmental adaptation, as the build-up of snow on a flat roof can cause it to cave in. Cultural influences similarly shape the preferred and available materials to build such structures.

One similarity among Christians is in treatment of the deceased. In most parts of the world, Christians bury the dead in cemeteries, although types of cemeteries may vary greatly. Most burials are underground, but in New Orleans, where the water table is high, cemeteries are above ground.



The Protestant Christian church on the left, in Norway, shows the style of churches farther from the hearth. The Orthodox Christian church on the right, in Greece, illustrates the dome-shaped roofs of the eastern Mediterranean region.

**Hinduism** Hindu temples often have elaborately carved exteriors with multiple manifestations of deities or significant characters. Thousands of shrines and temples dot the landscape in India since devout Hindus believe the construction of these religious structures will reflect well on them. Sacred sites, such as the Ganges River, provide pilgrims a place to bathe for the purpose of purification. Many Hindu shrines and temples are located near rivers and streams for this very purpose.



**Source:** Wikimedia Commons

Meenakshi Temple on Tamil Nadu, India, represents a common design for Hindu architecture. A Hindu woman prays in the River Ganges near the holy city of Varanasi.



Hindus practice cremation, the ritual burning of a dead body, as an act of purification as well. However, in some regions, a shortage of wood has made cremation very expensive. The ashes of the deceased are often spread in the Ganges River.



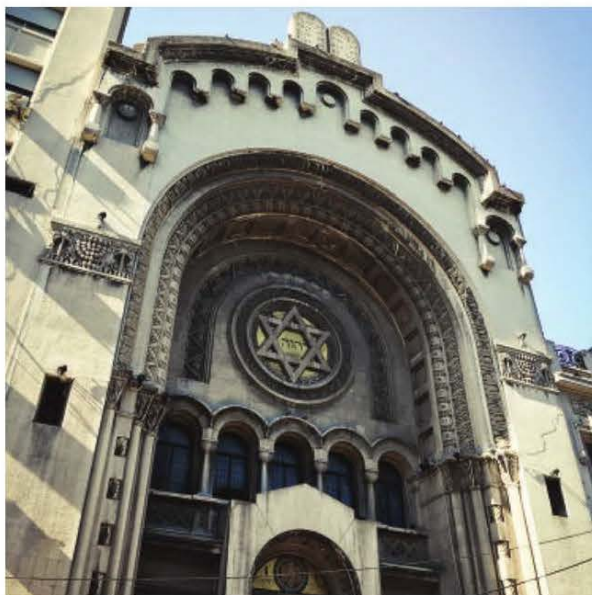
**Source:** Wikimedia Commons

A Buddha statue sits in front of a stupa-style temple in Java, Indonesia. Stupas are often plaster, stone, white, or gold.

**Buddhism** The practice of Buddhism differs widely from place to place and from ethnic group to ethnic group. However, most Buddhists emphasize meditating and living in harmony with nature. These features of Buddhism are represented in stupas, structures to store important relics and memorialize important events and beliefs. Stupas were often built to symbolize the five aspects of nature—earth, water, fire, air, and

space. Pagodas are also a common architectural style that developed from stupas, but unlike stupas, they are used as temples and people can enter into larger pagodas. Believers often meditate near both sacred spaces.

Among Buddhists, the decision to cremate or to bury the dead is a personal choice and consequently the imprint on the cultural landscape differs. Burial sites for Buddhists are often marked with memorials of individuals or families and often serve as a sacred quiet space to meditate.



**Source:** Getty Images

A Jewish synagogue in Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Judaism** Jews worship in synagogues or temples. Once concentrated in the Middle East, Jews spread throughout the world because of exile or persecution, or through voluntary migration. This scattering is known as *the Diaspora*. A **diaspora** occurs when one group of people is dispersed to various locations. Synagogues vary in size based on the number of Jews in an area. Burial of the dead customarily occurs before sundown on the day following the death.





**Source:** Wikimedia Commons  
The Putra Mosque in Putrajaya, Indonesia

**Islam** In places where Islam is widely practiced, the mosque is the most prominent structure on the landscape and is usually located in the center of town. Mosques have domes surrounded by a few minarets (Arabic for *beacon*) from which daily prayer is called. Burial of the dead is to be done as soon as possible, and burials are in cemeteries.

**Shinto** Shinto, whose cultural hearth is Japan, emphasizes honoring one's ancestors and the relationship between people and nature. One common landscape feature of Shinto shrines is an impressive gateway, or torii, to mark the transition from the outside world to a sacred space.



A torii is a traditional gate usually found in front of or within a Shinto shrine.

## How Religion and Ethnicity Shape Space

The first group to establish cultural and religious customs in a space is known as the **charter group**. Native Americans were the charter group in the Americas. Their influence appears in many places, such as in place names from Mt. Denali in Alaska to Miami, Florida. Often, the cultural landscape of charter groups shows their heritage. For example, English settlements in colonial America resembled the settlements they migrated away from in England, and names such as Plymouth and Jamestown reflect this heritage. The layout of these towns would often have a centrally located church, which also served as a meeting hall for the community.

### *Ethnic Landscape*

Ethnic groups that arrive after the charter group may choose to bypass the already established cultural location and create a distinctive space with their



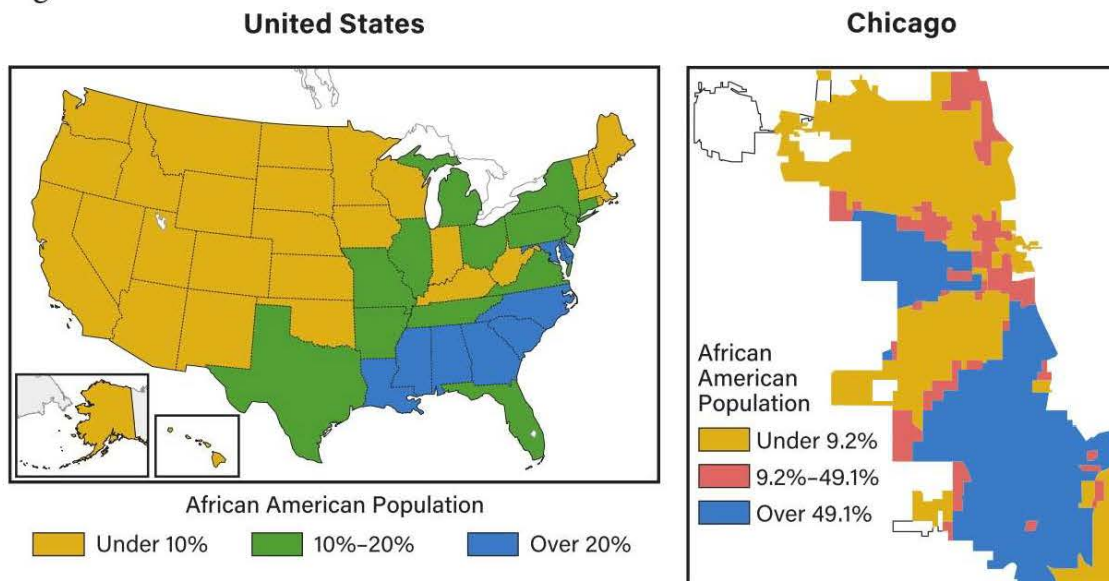
own customs. In urban areas, these enclaves become ethnic neighborhoods.

**Rural Areas** In rural areas, ethnic concentrations form **ethnic islands**. Their cultural imprints revolve around housing types and agricultural dwellings that reflect their heritage. Because ethnic islands are in rural areas and have less interaction with other groups than groups in cities, they maintain a strong and long-lasting sense of cohesion. Today, Germanic ethnic islands of people who fled religious persecution in the past continue to exist in the United States (the Pennsylvania Dutch and the Amish), Canada (Mennonites in Alberta), and in scattered locations in the Balkan region of southeastern Europe.

**Urban Ethnic Neighborhoods** Ethnic neighborhoods in urban settings are often occupied by migrants who settle in a charter group's former space. The charter group has already shaped much of the landscape, but new arrivals create their own influence as well. Dozens of cities around the world—Melbourne, Australia; Gachsaren, Iran; Liverpool, England; San Francisco—have neighborhoods known as “Chinatown.” The name tends to live on even if the original occupants have moved out or assimilated, and the neighborhood primarily caters to tourists.

Frequently, members of a particular ethnic group cluster in particular regions. Group members might choose to live close together for cultural reasons. This is often true of immigrants or some religious groups. Some ethnic clusters have specific needs requiring special funding, such as funds to help preserve distinctive architecture or to provide English language training.

Discrimination may limit the housing choices for members of a particular group. The most notable example of this were the practices in many cities that limited the neighborhoods where African Americans could live in the United States. As the maps below show, the distribution of African Americans varies based on scale. At the national scale, African Americans are concentrated in the southeast United States. At the state scale, they are often clustered in large cities. And at the city scale, African Americans are often clustered in particular neighborhoods.



The map shows the African American population in the United States and Chicago. What does changing scales of analysis reveal about the distributions of African Americans in the United States?

## New Cultural Influences

Ethnic groups move in and out of neighborhoods and create new cultural imprints on the landscape in a process geographers call **sequent occupancy**. In Chicago, the Pilsen neighborhood is heavily populated by Hispanics today, but its name recalls a history as a home for German and Czech immigrants. In New York City, the neighborhood of Harlem has been home to many ethnic groups: Jews from Eastern Europe starting in the late 1800s, African Americans from the southern United States starting in the 1910s, and Puerto Ricans starting in the late 1900s. As a result of sequent occupancy, Harlem's cultural landscape includes former Jewish synagogues, public spaces named for African American leaders such as Marcus Garvey Park, and street names honoring Puerto Rican leaders such as Luis Muñoz Marín Boulevard.

**Reactions to New Residents** When new groups move into a neighborhood the process of change can be well received and result in positive changes. However, the evolution and changing occupancy of neighborhoods can create cultural, economic and political tension. Tension often increases when the incoming group changes or destroys the cultural landscape without considering the people already living in the space. Conversely, existing residents can exhibit prejudices or resentment toward the group moving in. (See Topic 6.10.)

**Assertions of Identity** As a result of global culture and changing occupancy patterns, the ideas, traditions, and history of communities can erode. Sometimes people respond with **neolocalism**, the process of re-embracing the uniqueness and authenticity of a place. For example, a neighborhood in a large city might hold a festival to honor the cuisine, religion, and history of the migrants who settled the community.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *What are the characteristics of cultural landscapes and how do those characteristics, land use, and resource use reflect cultural beliefs and identities?*

Characteristics of Cultural Landscapes	Reflection of Cultural Identities in Land and Resource Use

### KEY TERMS

placelessness	ethnicity	diaspora
cultural landscape	ethnic enclaves	charter group
built environment	cultural regions	ethnic islands
traditional architecture	cultural realms	sequent occupancy
postmodern architecture	sacred place	neolocalism
contemporary architecture		



## Cultural Patterns

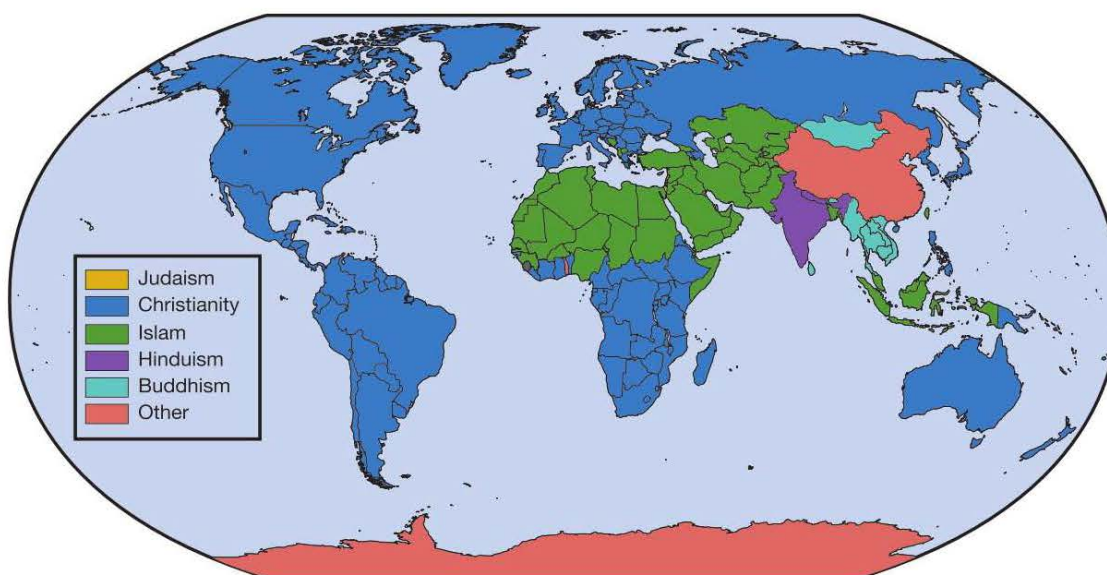
**Essential Question:** What are the patterns and landscapes of language, religion, ethnicity, and gender?

**C**ultural patterns consist of related sets of cultural traits and complexes that create similar behaviors across space. Geographers are particularly interested in understanding cultural patterns across time and space, specifically, patterns of cultural components such as religions, ethnicities, and nationalities. The diverse tapestry of cultures creates a rich local and global cultural landscape that enhances placemaking. The effects of these patterns have the power to bring people together or tear them apart. Patterns are powerful.

### Religious Patterns and Distributions

Developing strong mental maps of the origins, diffusion, and distribution of major religions and their divisions is one of the most valuable ways to understand culture. Geographers start by mapping a **culture hearth**, where a religion or ethnicity began, and then track its movement and predict its future direction. Religions, like other elements of culture, often diffuse outward from their hearths in various ways. The spread of religious settlements, both locally and globally, contributes to the sense of place and of belonging for each religious group and greatly shapes the cultural landscape.

#### LARGEST RELIGION BY COUNTRY



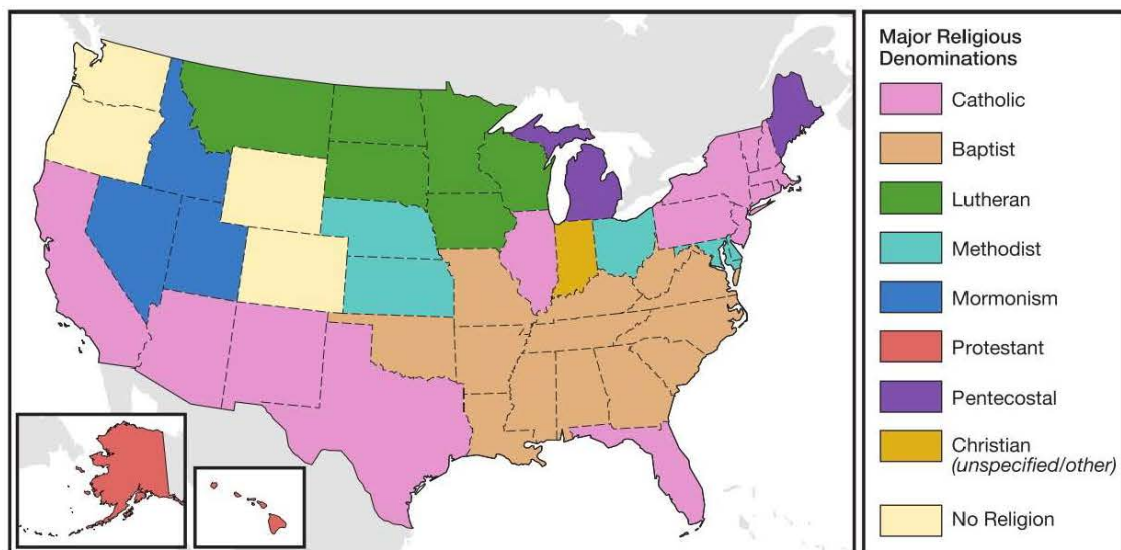
The choropleth map shown is very small scale and at the global level. However, the scale of analysis is at the state, or country, level. Among many other notable observations, Christianity is the most widespread religion by territory, and in China, most people identify no religious affiliation.

Geographers analyze maps, charts, and other data to understand the growth, decline, movement, and cultural landscapes of the world's religions. They have traced the geographic patterns of each major world religion, including the religion's hearth, the geographic spread of the religion, and practices that can influence both the culture and the cultural landscape.

### ***Regional Patterns in U.S. Religion***

The distribution of ethnic and religious groups in the United States reflects historical patterns:

- Congregationalists are still strong in New England, where their English ancestors settled in the 1600s.
- Baptists and Methodists are most common in the Southeast, where these denominations were spread by traveling preachers in the 1800s.
- Lutherans live mostly in the Midwest, where their German or Scandinavian ancestors, who immigrated in the late 1800s, could find good farmland.
- Many Mormons live in or near Utah, where their founders settled in the mid-1800s after religious persecution drove them out of Missouri and Illinois.
- Roman Catholics are most common in urban areas in the Northeast and throughout the Southwest.
- Jews, Muslims, and Hindus live most often in urban areas, the traditional home to immigrants.



### ***Cultural Variation by Place and Region***

Patterns and landscapes of religious and ethnic groups vary by place and region at different scales. The world map above shows that the United States is mostly Christian; however, the scale of the data hides the fact that the United States has great religious diversity. The map above does show data aggregated by state and can show the breakdown and spatial patterns of other religions. For example, the world map doesn't show the breakdown of Roman Catholics and Protestant



Christians. Additionally, at the regional level within the United States, Baptists are the most common religious group in the Southeast, but this cannot be seen on the world map.

## Religion, Ethnicity, and Nationality

Religion is often closely linked to **ethnicity**, or membership in a group of people who share characteristics such as ancestry, language, customs, history, and common experiences. Most geographers distinguish between **nationality**—based on people’s connection to a particular country—and ethnicity—based upon group cultural traits. For example, Russian Jews make up a different ethnicity than Russians in general.

Geographers often study ethnic groups as minorities within a greater population. To do so, they focus on mapping and analysis to trace the movement of ethnic groups and investigate their spatial dimensions and cultural landscapes. People often identify with both their ethnicity and nationality but the order of identification is a very personal process. In the United States, many Hispanics identify their nationality as American first, and then ethnically as Hispanic; others reverse the order.

## Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces

Understanding cultural patterns requires consideration of centripetal and centrifugal forces. **Centripetal forces** are those that unify a group of people or a region. These forces may include a common language and religion, a shared heritage and history, ethnic unity and tolerance, a just and fair legal system, a charismatic leader, or any other unifying aspect of culture. People tend to gravitate toward other people who share their beliefs, customs, interests, and background.

The United States has great religious and ethnic diversity, but the holiday season from November through December has unified many Americans. German and Scandinavian immigrants, among others, enjoyed the camaraderie of shared values and experiences, of holidays like Christmas. The German cultural trait of adorning Christmas trees diffused throughout the United States and has established itself as a part of American culture. Today, many people who do not celebrate Christmas as a holy day still consider the Christmas tree as a part of their culture.

**Centrifugal forces** are those that divide a group of people or a region. These forces can pull apart societies, nations, and states, and are essentially centripetal forces in reverse. Different languages and religions, a separate past, ethnic conflict, racism, unequal application of laws, or dictatorial leadership are just a few of the many cultural attributes that can sow division within a society.

Centrifugal forces can be especially harmful toward national cohesion in *multicultural states*, those which possess more than one distinct cultural identity or ethnic group within its borders. Ireland was historically Catholic since the 5<sup>th</sup> century. However, as England became Anglican—a Protestant



denomination—this cultural influence extended into Northern Ireland through invasion and migration. While Catholics and Anglicans are both Christians, the competition over territory, political power, and cultural influence drove the region into repeated violence over centuries.

In Iraq, Islam is dominant. However, there are regional divisions between the Shiite majority in the east and the Sunnis in the west. Ethnically, the majority of Iraqis are of Arabic heritage, yet there is a significant concentration of Kurds throughout northern regions of Iraq. (See Topic 4.3.) While cultural differences may lead to friction between groups, the competition for land, resources, and the desire for greater autonomy has also occasionally erupted into violence.

## Religion's Impact on Laws and Customs

Since religious traditions predate current governments, they are often the source for many present-day laws and punishments by the government. Some religions have strict systems of laws that have been adopted fully by governments. An example of this is **Sharia**, or the legal framework of a country derived from Islamic edicts taken from their holy book, the Qur'an. Sharia has been adopted by some fundamentalist religious groups, such as the Taliban in Afghanistan, as the law of the land.

While no highly industrialized countries have fully adopted religious laws, their legal codes often show clear influence of religion. In the United States, many communities have **blue laws**, laws that restrict certain activities, such as the sale of alcohol, on Sunday. In Colorado and some other states, car dealerships must be closed on Sunday as well.

In most countries, religious beliefs are more influential as guides to personal behavior than as state-sponsored laws. For example, many faiths include guidelines on the choices people make about what clothes they wear and how they cut their hair. Most faiths include some food taboos, prohibitions against eating and drinking certain items. For example, many Hindus do not eat beef, and many Jews and Muslims do not eat pork.

Religion is also the source of many daily, weekly, or annual practices for adherents:

- Many Muslims pray five times a day, and many Buddhists and Hindus engage in daily meditation.
- Most religions have weekly religious services for worship or instruction. For example, Muslims usually gather on Friday, Jews on Friday evening or Saturday morning, and Christians on Sunday.
- Many people celebrate important religious holy days, such as Holi—a festival of light for Hindus—and Vesak—which commemorates the birth of Buddha.

In addition, many days that people now commonly treat as secularized holidays have their roots in religious practices. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Mardi Gras all originated as Christian holy days.



## **Religious Fundamentalism**

The degree of adherence to tradition varies within each religion. Every religion includes followers who practice **fundamentalism**, an attempt to follow a literal interpretation of a religious faith. Fundamentalists believe that people should live traditional lifestyles similar to those prescribed in the faith's holy writings. In some traditions, this means that women are likely to leave school at a young age, to live in an arranged marriage, and to avoid working outside the home. Fundamentalists are more likely than others in their faith to enforce strict standards of dress and personal behavior, often through laws.

The strength of fundamentalism often diminishes with greater distance from the religious hearth, which is known as distance decay. (See Topic 1.4.) For example, the hearth of Islam is the Arabian Peninsula, and where Islamic fundamentalism has long been strongest. Fundamentalism is less prevalent in Muslim-majority countries farther from the hearth, such as Malaysia and Indonesia. One way to measure fundamentalism in Islam is by the role of Sharia. In countries where Sharia dominates, there is no separation between religious law and civil law. Sharia is strongest in countries of the Arabian Peninsula such as Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Some fundamentalist countries, such as Iran, are **theocracies**, countries whose governments are run by religious leaders through the use of religious laws. Iran follows Sharia and the nation's leader, the Supreme Leadership Authority, is not only the political head of the state, but concurrently its highest religious authority. Fundamentalists often clash, sometimes violently, with those who wish to follow religious traditions more loosely or to live a more secular lifestyle. All major religions of the world—including Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism—have a history of theocracy and each have some adherents who are fundamentalists.

## **Cultural Ethnocentrism and Relativism**

Most states are multiethnic in that they possess a significant number of people who do not identify with the national majority as their own ethnic group. If people are more **ethnocentric**, they believe their own cultural group is more important and superior to other cultures. In many cases, they see others by means of generalizations and stereotypes, and often do not seek to understand different customs or cultural norms. While loyalty and pride in one's own culture is common and understandable, ethnocentric views typically lead to misinterpretations of others and the value they give certain artifacts and mentifacts.

Without consciously pursuing an understanding of other cultures, a “we” versus “them” mentality can grow. Ethnocentrism may lead to centrifugal forces within a state, such as discrimination, intolerance, violence, and mass killings. The same attitude may lead to issues with other states, including misunderstandings, increased tension, or even war.

A counter to ethnocentric views has been **cultural relativism**, which is the concept that a person's or group's beliefs, values, norms, and practices should

be understood from the perspective of the other group's culture. Groups have developed their identities often through years—if not centuries—of environmental adaptation, interaction with other cultures, changing internal attitudes, and technological innovation. For example, many Americans are disgusted when some cultures eat fried insects. Applying cultural relativism, a geographer would attempt to understand why some communities may eat bugs. They would learn that other sources of protein were not available. This available food source was essential to survival and became ingrained in the community's culture over time.

**Cultural appropriation** is the action of adopting traits, icons, or other elements of another culture. The greatest concern is when the trait is adopted by the majority culture from a minority, or oppressed, cultural group. Concern increases if the trait is used out of context (not understanding the meaning of trait) or in an inappropriate or disrespectful way. An example would be naming sports teams after indigenous people or dressing up in costumes that propagate racial or cultural stereotypes. There is debate about where the boundaries of appropriation should be drawn. Not everyone agrees, with some arguing that people are too sensitive and that borrowing traits is a sign of respect and admiration, while others view it as a sign of oppression and discrimination.

Understanding other cultures from the inside affords everyone the opportunity to foster communication that leads to empathy and mutual respect. The culture-relativist perspective generally leads to centripetal forces within multiethnic societies and to vastly improved relations between states.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *What are the patterns and landscapes of language, religion, ethnicity, and gender?*

Religious Patterns That Shape the Global Landscape	Factors That Create Centripetal and Centrifugal Forces

### KEY TERMS

cultural patterns	blue laws
culture hearth	fundamentalism
ethnicity	theocracies
nationality	ethnocentrism
centripetal forces	cultural relativism
centrifugal forces	cultural appropriation
Sharia	



## Types of Diffusion

**Essential Question:** What are the types of diffusion and when does each occur?

People study deadly diseases in many ways. Doctors focus on treating patients. Economists focus on the supply for medicines. Geographers focus on spatial distribution, including how a disease diffuses outward from its hearth. The influenza outbreak of 1918–1919, immediately after World War I, diffused in the United States from east coast cities. Troops returning from Europe either carried the virus or contracted it in a port. Then, as troops traveled home, they spread the disease throughout the country. The virus killed more than 50 million people worldwide, more than double the battle deaths in the war.

### Types of Diffusion

The spread of information, ideas, behaviors, and other aspects of culture from their hearths to wider areas is known as **diffusion**. The two major forms of cultural diffusion come through exchanges between people. Some exchanges occur when people migrate from one place to another. Others result more indirectly, as people share ideas.

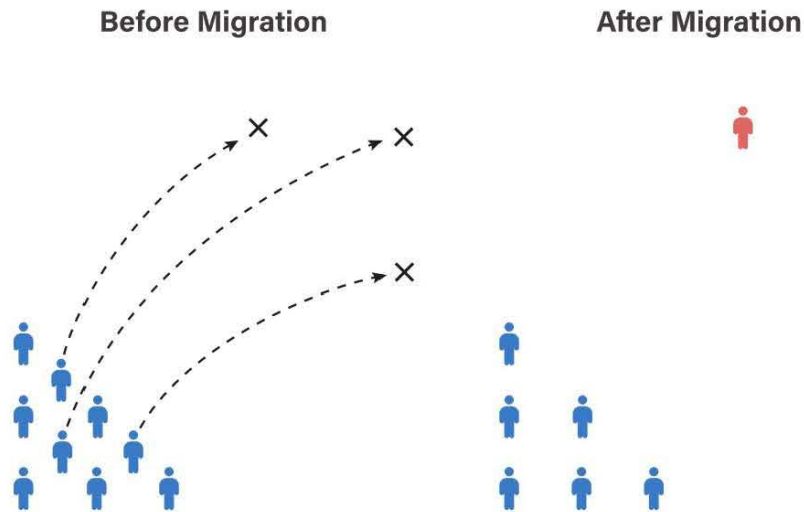
The spread of disease is one example of diffusion. Outbreaks of Ebola in West Africa in 2013, the Zika virus in South America in 2015, and COVID-19 in 2020 threatened death and serious illness. However, using geospatial medical data and geographic reasoning, scientists had learned how to combat diffusion of diseases. Coordinated global and national public health efforts prevented death on the scale of the 1918–1919 flu outbreak.

### *Relocation Diffusion*

One main type of diffusion is **relocation diffusion**, the spread of culture and/or cultural traits by people who migrate and carry their cultural traits with them. A small-scale example is the spread of pizza, which Italian immigrants brought to the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. A large-scale example is the spread of European culture around the world starting in the 1500s.

At times, the areas where migrants settle continue a trait after it has lost its influence in its hearth. The people in the modern world who pronounce English most like Shakespeare did in the 1500s live in Appalachia (from southern New York to northern Alabama), not in England. Disco music evolved in the United States in the 1970s but remained popular in Egypt long after its popularity faded in the United States.

## RELOCATION DIFFUSION



### *Expansion Diffusion*

The spread of cultural traits outward through exchange without migration is called **expansion diffusion**. Unlike relocation diffusion, expansion diffusion requires a different person to adopt the trait. It occurs in many ways.

**Contagious diffusion** occurs when a cultural trait spreads continuously outward from its hearth through contact among people. For example, the hearth for blues music is the southern United States. As musicians outside the hearth heard the music, they began to play it themselves. Blues slowly spread northward and reached cities such as St. Louis, Chicago, and New York.

**Hierarchical diffusion** is the spread of culture outward from the most interconnected places or from centers of wealth and influence. Cultural traits spread first from one powerful person, city, or powerful class to another powerful person, city, or social class. Eventually the trait could be shared with other people, smaller cities, different social classes, or less-developed countries. Unlike contagious diffusion, hierarchical diffusion may skip some places while moving on to others. Most popular culture, such as music, fashion, and fads, follows the hierarchical diffusion path.

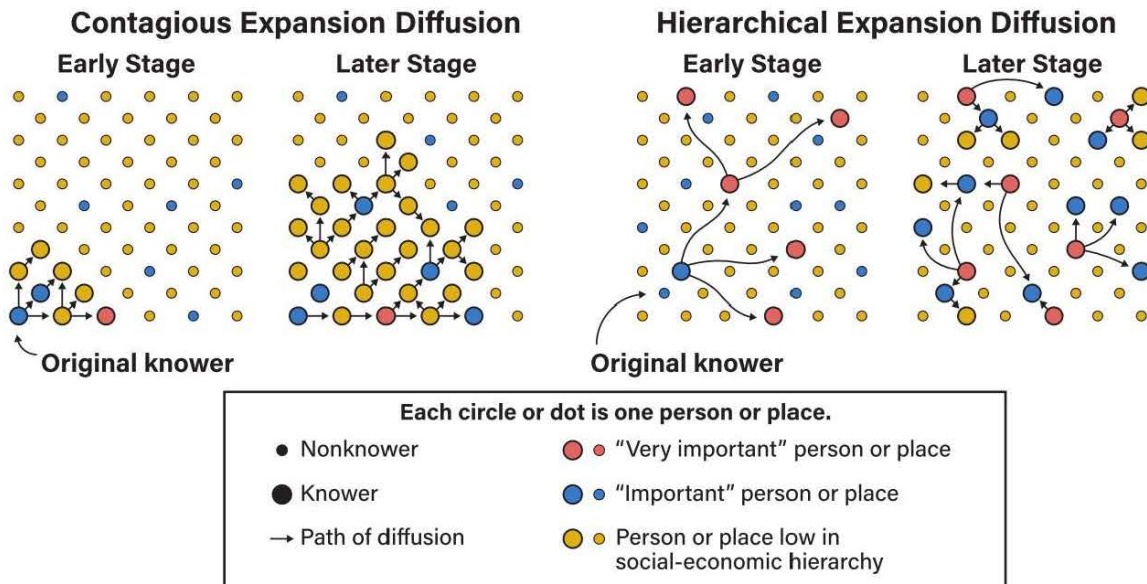
Cell phone technology demonstrates how hierarchical diffusion works. When cell phones first appeared in the 1980s, they were expensive. Only wealthy people in large cities in developed countries owned them. As cell phone networks grew and cell phones became mass-produced, they eventually spread to a wider market. Today, cell phones have diffused throughout the world.

At times, a trait diffuses from a group of lower status to a group of higher status, in a process called **reverse hierarchical diffusion**. For example, in the United States in the 1940s through the 1960s, people commonly considered tattoos to be a symbol of low social status. Tattoos were associated with three types of places: seaport towns (among dockworkers and sailors), military bases, and prisons. Since the 1970s, the custom of getting tattoos has diffused throughout many segments of society and geographic areas.



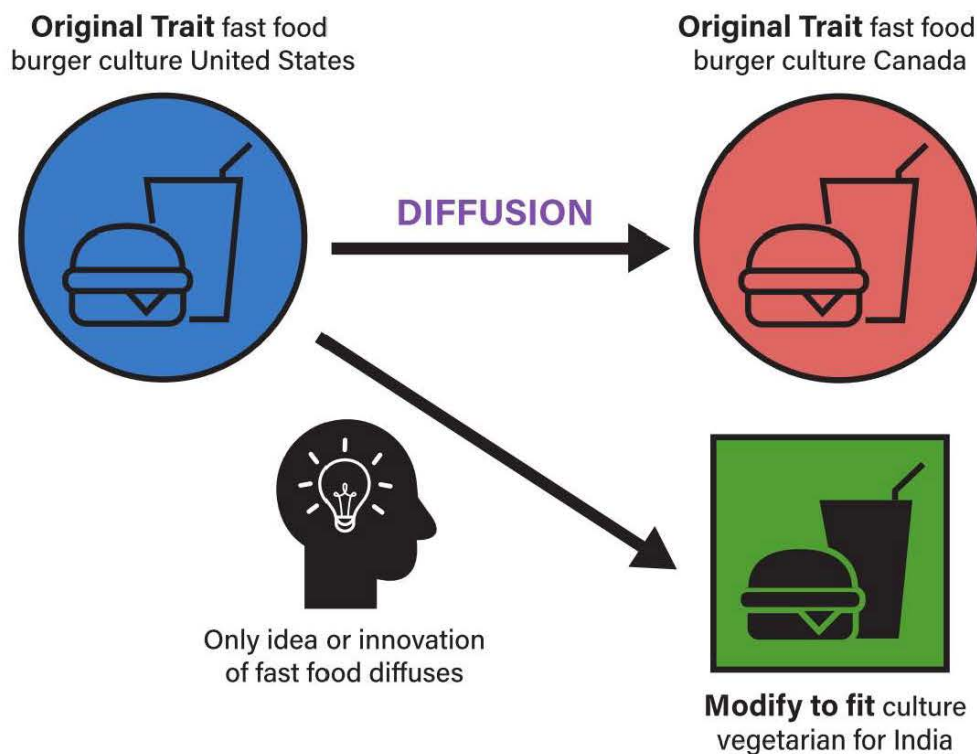
Some reverse hierarchical diffusion goes from small, rural communities to larger urban areas. Walmart stores diffused from rural Arkansas to small cities and now nearly every city in the United States.

### EXPANSION DIFFUSION



The process of **stimulus diffusion** is when an underlying idea from a culture hearth is adopted by another culture but the adopting group modifies or rejects one trait.

### STIMULUS DIFFUSION



For example, Hindus in India adopted the practice of eating fast food, but they rejected eating beef because doing so would violate their Hindu beliefs. So, they adapted the custom by making vegetarian and other non-beef types of burgers. Five centuries ago, Europeans adopted the use of lightweight, beautifully decorated porcelain dishes that they obtained from China, but they rejected the high cost of importing the dishes. So, when people in Germany found deposits of the right type of clay to make their own porcelain, they modified the process of obtaining porcelain by making it in Europe.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *What are the types of diffusion and when does each occur?*

Types of Diffusion	Examples of Types of Diffusion

### KEY TERMS

diffusion	contagious diffusion	reverse hierarchical
relocation diffusion	hierarchical diffusion	diffusion
expansion diffusion		stimulus diffusion



### GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES: MUSLIMS OF THE UNITED STATES

Muslims have been living in the Americas since the days of Columbus. Geographers have studied the patterns in the diffusion of Muslims in the Americas, including the reasons behind their involuntary or voluntary migrations and where they have been concentrated.

#### Muslims Among Enslaved Africans

The first concentration of Muslims was in what is now the southeastern United States. As many as 15 percent of the enslaved Africans brought to the Americas were followers of Islam.

#### Migrants to Industrial Cities

Then, between 1890 and 1917, a new wave of Muslim immigrants entered the United States. Most came from Bosnia, Turkey, Syria, and other lands in the Middle East. Pulled by the lure of industrial jobs, most settled in the growing cities of the North and Midwest.

Industrial cities in the 1920s and 1930s also attracted millions of African Americans from the rural South. Some African Americans joined a distinctive movement within Islam, known as the Black Muslims. They were concentrated in New York, Detroit, and Chicago. Today, about one-fifth of American Muslims are African Americans.



## Diverse Immigrants

In recent decades, Muslim immigrants have come from around the world. While many come from the Middle East and South Asia, others migrate from Nigeria, Indonesia, and other countries. Again, they commonly settled in large urban areas, but increasingly in suburban communities, such as Dearborn, Michigan. Today, Muslims constitute about 1 percent of the total population.

1. What type of migration is represented when Muslim slaves were brought to the United States?
2. What are the benefits for Muslims to concentrate together in small communities in cities or small towns?



### THINK AS A GEOGRAPHER: RELIGIOUS SPACES AT DIFFERENT SCALES

The distribution of religious elements on the landscape reflects the importance of religion in society's values. How each religion distributes its elements across the landscape depends on its beliefs. The impact of religion is clearly seen on the landscape at several scales from small areas within homes to entire communities.

Explain how the concept of scale applies to the three following religious landscapes.



1. Hindu home shrine in India



2. Vatican City, Italy



3. Buddhist five-story pagoda, Japan

1. How does the location of the Hindu shrine reflect the religious traditions in Hinduism?
2. What scale of analysis does the photograph of Vatican City represent?
3. How does the photograph of the pagoda suggest a regional scale of analysis?

# CHAPTER 6 REVIEW:

## Cultural Landscapes, Patterns, and Diffusion

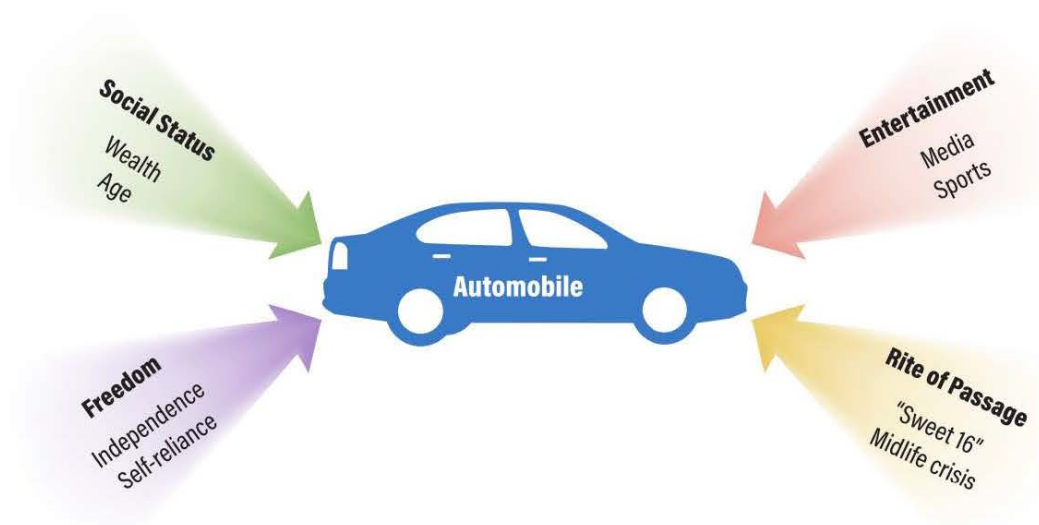
*Topics 3.1–3.4*

### MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

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Question 1 refers to the diagram below.

#### CULTURAL COMPLEX OF THE AUTOMOBILE IN THE UNITED STATES

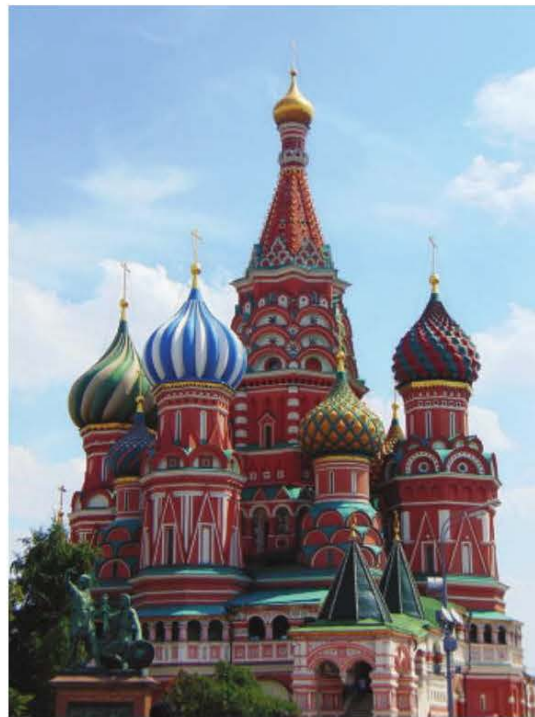


1. According to the cultural complex described in the diagram, auto ownership provides transportation but also
- (A) represents a set of American cultural traits, such as self-reliance and independence
  - (B) provides greater likelihood that its owner will attain American values such as wealth
  - (C) represents one American cultural trait, depending on the values of the auto's owner
  - (D) comes about as a result of possession of a particular American trait, such as wealth
  - (E) helps identify the owner's cultural landscape, region, realm, and level of freedom



2. Which of the following best demonstrates the concept of a culture hearth?
- (A) The Middle East, where many cultures share the religion of Islam
  - (B) Latin America, which consists of several distinct but related cultures
  - (C) The places in the world where material and nonmaterial traits emerged
  - (D) The buildings, roads, and other elements built by humans
  - (E) An area within a city where people share a common culture distinct from the surrounding culture

**Question 3 refers to the image below.**



3. The architecture style of Saint Basil Eastern Orthodox Cathedral in Moscow, Russia, is most clearly an example of the city's cultural
- (A) barriers
  - (B) enclaves
  - (C) realm
  - (D) landscape
  - (E) borders

4. A family that immigrates from China to the United States and chooses to live in an ethnic enclave is probably hoping to
- (A) expose their children to people of many other cultures
  - (B) assimilate their family into American culture as quickly as possible
  - (C) find a buffer against discrimination while they seek new opportunities
  - (D) find more religious and language diversity than in most communities
  - (E) separate itself from its Chinese culture rapidly and completely
5. Which of the following best describes an artifact?
- (A) The territory in which people reside including valleys and rivers
  - (B) The nonmaterial culture consisting of intangible things such as beliefs and values
  - (C) A way in which people organize their society such as through families and government
  - (D) The material culture consisting of tangible things, such as food and clothing
  - (E) The interaction between different groups including trading and negotiating
6. Amish residents of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, who are descendants of immigrants from Switzerland in the 1700s, live without the benefits of electricity. This choice is an example of
- (A) an adherence to traditional culture
  - (B) a longstanding indigenous culture
  - (C) a dominant national identity
  - (D) acclimation to their new environment
  - (E) an adaptation of popular culture
7. Which pattern is more typical of folk/traditional cultures than other types of cultures?
- (A) Welcoming in new practices from other cultures
  - (B) Promoting a high level of religious diversity
  - (C) Taking steps to transform rural areas into urban areas
  - (D) Emphasizing the value of customs
  - (E) Establishing flexible gender roles



## FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION

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Shibuya Crossing in Tokyo, Japan

1. Cultural values and traditions help people develop a sense of place where they live. As globalization increases, various cultures come in contact with each other, resulting in a variety of processes and impacts.
  - (A) Define the concept of cultural landscape.
  - (B) Define the concept of globalization.
  - (C) Using the image of Tokyo, Japan, describe an element of the photo that illustrates globalization.
  - (D) Explain the diffusion of popular culture using the concept of hierarchical diffusion.
  - (E) Explain how traditional cultures most commonly diffuse.
  - (F) Describe how global culture is threatening to traditional folk cultures.
  - (G) Identify the scale of analysis of the image shown and describe a limitation of the image related to scale.

## CHAPTER 7

# Historical and Contemporary Processes of Diffusion

## *Topics 3.5–3.8*

### **Topic 3.5 Historical Causes of Diffusion**

*Learning Objective:* Explain how historical processes impact current cultural patterns. (SPS-3.A)

### **Topic 3.6 Contemporary Causes of Diffusion**

*Learning Objective:* Explain how historical processes impact current cultural patterns. (SPS-3.A)

### **Topic 3.7 Diffusion of Religion and Language**

*Learning Objective:* Explain what factors led to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions. (IMP-3.B)

### **Topic 3.8 Effects of Diffusion**

*Learning Objective:* Explain how the process of diffusion results in changes to the cultural landscape. (SPS-3.B)

*In 1979, [schools on the Navajo reservation had about] 80 percent of students speaking Navajo – ten years later, 5 percent. There’s just too much English influence to really be effective in keeping our language. [If the Navajo language is lost] we will not be a unique people. We will have no culture; we will have no prayers.*

—Marilyn Begay, 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, The Navajo Language Immersion School, Navajo Nation reservation, Arizona



A bilingual stop sign in Quebec, Canada. (See Topic 3.7 for more about cultural landscape.)



## Historical Causes of Diffusion

**Essential Question:** How do historical processes impact current cultural patterns?

Today, few formal colonies remain in the world, but the practices left behind by the European powers are present in their former colonies. The afternoon break for tea, a British tradition, is still practiced in Kenya and India. Christianity and the legacy of colonial languages are still widespread in many former colonies.

### Influences of Colonialism, Imperialism, and Trade

Colonialism, imperialism, and trade have played a powerful role in spreading religion and culture. Historians often divide European colonialism into two separate waves. From the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Europeans colonized the Americas and South Asia. Then, during the next two centuries, European powers expanded colonization into most of Africa, Southwest Asia, and other coastal regions of East and Southeast Asia.

Imperialism and colonialism are related ideas, but they are not the same. **Imperialism** is a broader concept that includes a variety of ways of influencing another country or group of people by direct conquest, economic control, or cultural dominance. **Colonialism** is a particular type of imperialism in which people move into and settle on the land of another country. Examples of imperialism and colonialism can be found throughout history and all over the world, but modern European imperialism and colonialism are the most relevant to the current political map because they strongly influenced the diffusion of language and religion.

European colonizers imposed their cultural traits on the local populations. For example, before European colonization, most religions practiced by the native indigenous people of Africa and North America were forms of **animism**, the belief that non-living objects, such as rivers or mountains, possess spirits. Europeans forced many of their colonial subjects to adopt the Christian faith. The Spanish and French spread Roman Catholicism throughout Latin America and North America. The English and Dutch spread forms of Protestantism in their North American colonies.

### Diffusion of Languages

Languages commonly spread through both relocation and expansion diffusion. As people migrated and colonized to new locations, they brought their culture and language with them via relocation diffusion. Additionally, via political

control a colonial language would be imposed hierarchically as the language of trade, business, and politics. People wanting to benefit financially would connect to these networks of power and influence by learning and speaking colonial languages resulting in an expansion of language. Some languages spread over wide areas of the world and often follow a mixture of types of diffusion. The major globalized languages of the world—English, French, Spanish, and Arabic—spread from their hearths largely because of conquest and colonialism. In the case of Arabic, its use as the standard religious language in Islam contributed to its success and facilitated an expansion of adherents.

**Widely Diffused Languages** Trade has aided the spread of languages because ships, railroads, and other forms of transportation built and strengthened connections between places. Trade, conquest, and colonialism have so widely spread some languages that more people speak it outside its hearth than within it. For example, the largest population of speakers of Portuguese are in Brazil, not Portugal. The same is true for English, Spanish, and French—the highest population of speakers for each of those languages are not in the hearth.

MOST SPOKEN LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD IN ORDER OF TOTAL SPEAKERS			
Language	Language Hearth	Total Population of Hearth 2019	Total Speakers Worldwide 2019 (native and second language)
English	England	55 million	Over 1.5 billion
Mandarin (Chinese)	China	1.4 billion	Over 1.2 billion
Hindi	India	1.3 billion	Over 615 million
Spanish	Spain	47 million	Over 570 million
French	France	67 million	Over 300 million
Arabic	Arabian Peninsula	78 million	Over 270 million

Chart appears in order of total speakers worldwide. Which languages have not diffused extensively from their hearth? What are reasons why they did not diffuse widely?

**Limited Diffusion of Mandarin** Some languages have never diffused widely. Mandarin Chinese, though the second-most commonly spoken language in the world, did not spread globally. China has been among the most powerful and innovative countries in the world for much of the past 2,000 years, and its merchants settled in various parts of Asia and locations in the Pacific Ocean. Yet China never established colonies outside of Asia and, as a result, Chinese speakers have always been concentrated in China and port cities in Asia.

Mandarin does have the most **native speakers**, those who use the language learned from birth, with over 900 million native speakers. The Chinese government wants to increase the number of Mandarin speakers and has been using government policies and its economic influence to encourage the use of Mandarin throughout Asia and across the world.



## English as a Lingua Franca

Unlike Chinese, English has a wide spatial distribution. English is the most widely used language in the world, with over 1.5 billion speakers. Native speakers (380 million) are concentrated in lands colonized by Great Britain such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, India, and Australia.

However, most speakers of English do not use it as their primary language. Rather, they use it as a **lingua franca**, a common language used by people who do not share the same native language. For example, Nigerians commonly speak one of 500 indigenous languages at home, but they learn English to communicate with everyone who does not speak their language. Globalization and new technology explain why English is often used as a lingua franca:

- U.S. and British multinational corporations made English the common language for international business.
- Scientists and other scholars, airline pilots, and journalists have used English to communicate with others across the globe.
- English evolved as the lingua franca of the Internet and is widely used in social media.
- English is often spoken by actors in television shows and movies which are shown around the world.

The wide use of English has made communication among people around the world easier. However, it has also sparked resentment in some who feel that the intrusion of American English language and western culture delegitimizes their own unique linguistic and cultural practices.

## Creating New Words and Languages

Many new words begin as **slang**, words used informally by a segment of the population. As the world has become more globalized, certain words have spread dramatically and their meaning has changed. For example, the word *brunch* was slang before it became standard. Slang used in video gaming chats such as “w00t,” to express excitement or victory, has diffused to common language today as woot.

## Pidgin Languages

When speakers of two different languages have extensive contact with each other, often because of trade, they sometimes develop a **pidgin language**, a simplified mixture of two languages. A pidgin language has fewer grammar rules and a smaller vocabulary than either language but is not the native language of either group. In Papua New Guinea, the pidgin combines English and Papuan languages.

## Creole Languages

Over time, two or more separate languages can mix and develop a more formal structure and vocabulary so that they are no longer a pidgin language. They create a new combined language, known as a **creole language**. Afrikaans is

a creole language spoken in South Africa that combines Dutch with several European and African languages.

On the islands of the Caribbean, creole languages are common. Africans captured and enslaved in the Americas between the 1500s and the 1800s were unable to transplant their languages. Stolen from their communities, they were forced onto ships with captives from various regions in Africa. With no common language among the groups of captives, communication was difficult. Most groups lost their languages after a generation in the Americas because of this linguistic isolation. Yet they were able to create creole languages by combining parts of their African languages with the European colonizers' languages of English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese.

The most widely used creole language in the Americas is found in Haiti. Haitian Creole is derived mostly from French with influences from numerous languages of West Africa. It has become an official language of Haiti and a source of national pride and cultural identity.

### Swahili in East Africa

Another example of language mixing occurred in East Africa. As early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century, trade between Arab-speaking merchants and Bantu-speaking residents resulted in the development of Swahili. Swahili is estimated to be spoken by some 50 to 100 million people in Africa and is an official language of five African nations—Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Many proponents believe that using Swahili as the common language of Africa would help promote unity within the continent. They also feel it would help Africans overcome the legacy of colonialism. Using Swahili would help erase the notion that speaking European languages is prestigious and critical for advancement while using native languages is viewed as an obstacle to advancements in social, economic, and political spheres.

#### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *How do historical processes impact current cultural patterns?*

Historical Processes That Have Shaped Culture	Resulting Cultural Patterns

#### KEY TERMS

imperialism	native speakers	pidgin language
colonialism	lingua franca	creole language
animism	slang	



## Contemporary Causes of Diffusion

**Essential Question:** How do contemporary processes impact cultural patterns?

Cultural ideas and practices are socially constructed and change through both small-scale and large-scale processes such as urbanization and globalization. **Social constructs** are ideas, concepts, or perceptions that have been created and accepted by people in a society or social group and are not created by nature. These processes influence culture through media, technological change, politics, economics, and social relationships. In the past, technology has facilitated the spread of multiple languages. However, contemporary communication technologies have encouraged the use of fewer languages, especially English, Chinese, and Spanish. Globalization has further encouraged this phenomena because of the fundamental need for a lingua franca to communicate across cultures.

### Communication Technologies

Communication technologies have allowed for the globalization of popular culture through multiple methods of spatial diffusion. Music, video games, TV shows, cars, and clothing are heavily influenced by mass media, the Internet, and traditional and online publishing.

Due to historical processes such as colonialism, conquest, and trade, the English language diffused around the world. More recent developments in the ease of use and access to many of these technologies have served to strengthen the use of American English around the world. The elite hierarchies, or most influential creators of popular or global culture, continue to concentrate in the usual major cities—New York City, Los Angeles, London, and Tokyo. Major news networks, publishers, and multinational corporations have driven popular culture creation over the last 75 years.

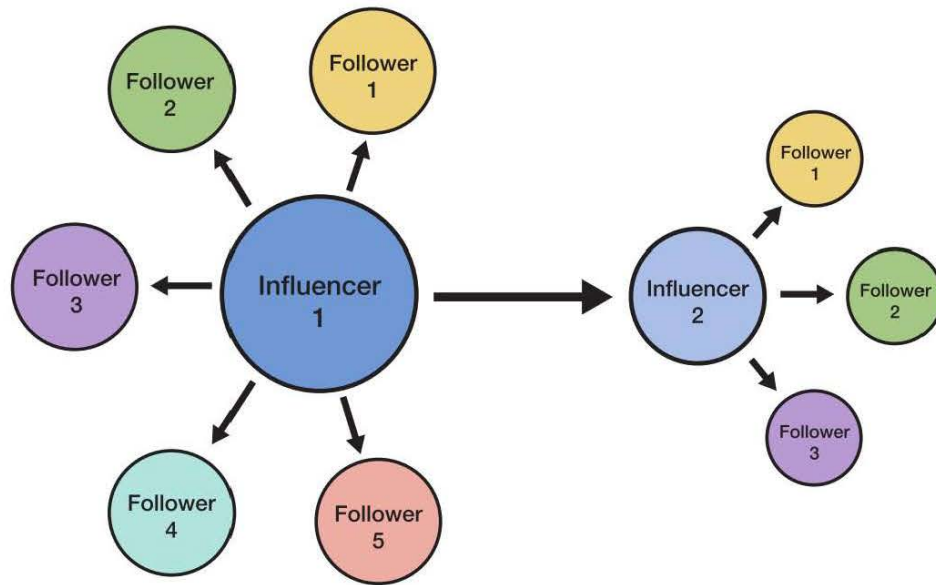
However, access to social media, search engines, and entertainment on the web is challenging traditional corporate sources of popular culture. The rise of social media allows for individuals or small groups of people to promote their own self-produced forms of entertainment (TikTok and YouTube, for example), eSports, fashion, and other products, creating influencers who challenge the status quo and how culture is created and diffused.

As a result of technological changes, the rate of diffusion has increased dramatically and the patterns of diffusion have taken on new and interesting forms. Social media at its heart is a form of expansion and contagious diffusion. However, hierarchical diffusion is shown via the connections that people have

with influencers and the vast networks of their followers. The hierarchical diffusion graphic below also illustrates a nodal, or functional regional pattern.

Technology can be a global equalizing force by helping to provide access to information and economic opportunity. However, if a person does not have access to the Internet, the world is still a very unequal place.

### HIERARCHICAL DIFFUSION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS



The size of the circles indicates the number of followers. Arrows indicate sharing of information. Each follower would also have their own network of connection. What could be added to this graphic/model to make it a more complete representation of how diffusion works on the Internet and social media? Defend your response with evidence or examples.

## Time-Space Convergence

The greater interconnection between places that results from improvements in transportation is called **time-space convergence**. It often makes places less culturally distinct. For example, in 1492 it took Christopher Columbus 36 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean on a wind-powered ship. By 1907, that time was reduced to 4.5 days due to the invention of the steam engine. Modern commercial aviation replaced ocean liners as the dominant mode of transatlantic transportation. A commercial airplane makes the transatlantic journey from Europe to North America in about 7 hours. Modern communication technologies have caused a similar change in the amount of time needed for information to travel.

Time-space convergence provides another way of thinking about geography as not just physical space but also of relative distance. While transportation and communication changes do not actually “shrink” the earth, the time and cost of movement between places have greatly decreased, making the earth feel smaller. This demonstrates how a person’s sense of time and space vary based upon cultural, economic, and social factors.



## Cultural Convergence and Divergence

As the relative distance between places shrinks, the interactions among cultures increases. Some argue that globalization is resulting in **cultural convergence**—cultures are becoming similar to each other and sharing more cultural traits, ideas, and beliefs. This cultural homogenization, or becoming more alike, is a concern for many societies and is met with resistance by some people. (See Topic 3.8.) These interactions often result in cultural change. For example, people around the world wear jeans and t-shirts on a daily basis and are less likely to wear the traditional clothing of their ancestors or parents. In many instances, cultural convergence can cause indigenous or traditional cultures and languages to become extinct.

Occasionally, people use new technologies and social media to help preserve local or threatened languages. Technology is used to record and preserve languages that could become extinct in the face of cultural convergence. Communities of speakers use social media to discuss and share their cultural beliefs and language with other members of the community who are separated from or have left an area. That increases the likelihood of preservation of some elements of language and culture.

**Cultural divergence** is the idea that a culture may change over time as the elements of distance, time, physical separation, and modern technology create divisions and changes. A culture's isolation because of absorbing barriers of physical geography, such as mountains, oceans, or distance, can halt diffusion. The longer a group is isolated, the more slowly its culture will change or diverge from the original culture. Today, most barriers are permeable, which means that part of an idea or trait may reach a cultural group but usually not enough to rapidly change the entire culture. As new ideas seep into the culture, the pace and changes can occur more quickly, especially if a person moves away from their home and into a city or new region.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *How do contemporary processes impact cultural patterns?*

Methods of Contemporary Diffusion	How Methods Diffuse Culture

### KEY TERMS

social constructs  
time-space convergence

cultural convergence  
cultural divergence

## Diffusion of Religion and Language

**Essential Question:** What factors lead to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions?

The Navajo, a Native American group of the Southwest United States, face many of the same problems as indigenous people across the world—the loss of their native language and culture in the context of globalization. Currently there are approximately 7,000 languages that people around the world speak. But by the end of the century, about half of those languages will be gone. Most of the languages are spoken by small, isolated groups. As these groups become integrated into the larger society, the people often learn the language of the majority. The traditional language falls into disuse and becomes extinct. Since language is the key element in communication, with this loss of the language comes a loss of a central part of a group's history, ethnicity, and cultural identity.

### Relationships Among Languages

As the Navajo example illustrates, language is essential to a group's culture. It creates a sense of place and a cultural landscape. The Navajos' experience shows that today's communication technologies are reshaping cultures and bringing drastic changes to languages. Some of these changes can contribute to destroying age-old practices and languages.

Yet language, like all elements of culture, has always been changing. The earliest languages spread from their culture hearths and faced a multitude of local, international, and global forces. These global forces include conquest, colonialism, imperialism, trade, and the widespread instant communication of the present day.

### Origins of Language

Currently, **linguists**, scientists who study languages, have differing theories as to when humans first began communicating through spoken sounds. Some claim first communication began as recently as tens of thousands of years ago to as long ago as a few hundred thousand years. They are also unsure how language diffused:

- Was it through the dispersion of people, who carried language with them as they spread across the planet?
- Was it through transmission, as people learned language from their neighbors?
- Was it through conquest, with one people imposing language on others?



## Language Families

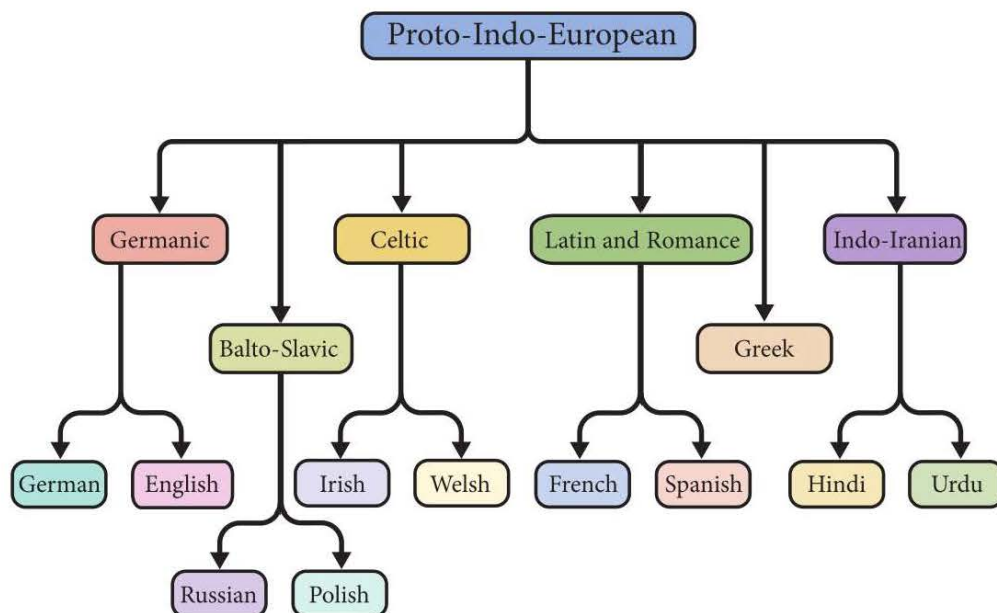
Linguists also are uncertain whether all languages descended from one original language. They do agree that nearly all of the languages spoken today can be grouped into about 15 language families. The relationship among these language families is often shown on a **language tree** because it suggests how several languages are related to each other, as well as how one language grows out of another.

The distribution of languages reflects human migrations. For example, the migration of Huns from central Asia to central Europe around 1,500 years ago explains why the languages most like Hungarian are found nearly 3,000 miles east of Hungary.

## Indo-European Languages

One of the 15 major language families is the **Indo-European language family**, a large group of languages that might have descended from a language spoken around 6,000 years ago. Nearly half of the world's population speaks one of the languages of the Indo-European language family. This family includes about 2.8 billion native speakers of between 400 and 500 languages.

### EXAMPLES OF INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES



The British Isles were settled by waves of Germanic speaking peoples over millennia. In 1066 French was introduced to the islands when England was conquered by William the Conqueror of Normandy.

One of the branches of the Indo-European language tree is Latin, and its history shows the difficulties in the study of language. Languages are challenging to study because they constantly evolve as people move away from the languages' cultural hearths, have contact with other languages, or are isolated from other languages.

Two thousand years ago, when the Roman Empire dominated much of what is present-day Europe, people there spoke Latin. However, as the empire dissolved, starting in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, transportation became more dangerous and trade declined. As a result, Latin speakers became geographically isolated from each other. The unifying language of Latin diverged into dozens of distinct regional languages, known as **Romance languages**. Most of these later vanished, but Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, and Romanian, among others survived and grew. The historical connection among these languages is evident in their similar words.

LATIN WORDS RELATED TO WORDS IN OTHER LANGUAGES					
Latin (meaning in English)	Pater (father)	Mater (mother)	Panis (bread)	Lupus (wolf)	Die (day)
Portuguese	Pai	Mae	Pao	Lobo	Dia
Spanish	Padre	Madre	Pan	Lobo	Dia
French	Pere	Mere	Pain	Loup	Jour
Italian	Padre	Madre	Pane	Lupo	Giorno
Romanian	Tata	Mama	Paine	Lup	Zi

What patterns of similarity do you notice between words in each of the Latin-based languages? What does this tell us about the different languages' development?

Note that English words such as *father* and *mother* are similar to Latin words, but words such as *bread* and *wolf* are not. This suggests that English is not a direct descendant of Latin. English evolved from a Germanic language but has been heavily influenced by Romance languages such as French.

### **Accents and Dialects**

Languages can be further divided into smaller categories by other traits. One is by accent, how words sound when pronounced. Accents often reflect social class or geographic region. The boundaries between variations in pronunciations or word usage are called **isoglosses**. For example, as you move from east to west in Texas, the term “dry creek bed” used near Dallas is replaced by the Spanish word “arroyo.” This isogloss represents the boundary between southern dialect and a Texan variation.

Variations in accent, grammar, usage, and spelling create **dialects**, or regional variations of a language. Variations between dialects are large enough that most speakers notice them, but small enough that speakers can understand each other easily. Often, the dialect spoken by the most influential group in a country is considered the standard, and others are modifications of it. “Hello, everyone” is standard. “Hi, y’all” and “Hi, you guys” are dialectical variations.

Dialects often include distinct **adages**, or sayings that attempt to express a truth about life, such as “the early bird gets the worm.” Additionally, dialects are geographic and create formal regions of a country or the world. Within dialects



are subdialects. For example, in the United States, a native of Texas is likely to speak a different dialect than a native of New York City.

Often, dialects are the legacy of differences in the past, but they can also be a first step in the evolution of a new language. Just as the Romance languages emerged as regional variations of Latin, new languages are developing today. For example, if the differences between British English and American English increased so much that speakers could not easily communicate with each other, the two would be classified as different languages instead of dialects of one.

The following chart shows differences between two dialects of English—American and British.

DIALECTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH AND BRITISH ENGLISH		
Category	American English	British English
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Elevator</li> <li>▪ Apartment</li> <li>▪ Parking lot</li> <li>▪ Trunk (of a car)</li> <li>▪ Gas (for a car)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lift</li> <li>▪ Flat</li> <li>▪ Car park</li> <li>▪ Boot</li> <li>▪ Petrol</li> </ul>
<b>Pronunciation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lieutenant (loo-TEN-uhnt)</li> <li>▪ Schedule (SKED-juhl)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lieutenant (lef-TEN-uhnt)</li> <li>▪ Schedule (SCHEDZH-uhl)</li> </ul>
<b>Spelling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meter</li> <li>▪ Color</li> <li>▪ Tire</li> <li>▪ Center</li> <li>▪ Theater</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Metre</li> <li>▪ Colour</li> <li>▪ Tyre</li> <li>▪ Centre</li> <li>▪ Theatre</li> </ul>
<b>Common Phrases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ "I'm tired."</li> <li>▪ "I'll call you."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ "I'm knackered."</li> <li>▪ "I'll ring you."</li> </ul>

## Language Policies and Cultural Landscape

Language is important to a group's cultural identity. Because a culture occupies a certain spatial area, its language becomes intertwined with that place and its landscape. For example, native Hawaiians, whose economy relies on fishing, have five dozen words for fishing nets. In addition, signs can create a cultural landscape as they reflect the people's linguistic heritage and tie them to that place—from the single-language signs in France to bilingual signs in places such as Belgium, Quebec, or Wales.

### Toponyms

**Toponyms**, or the names of places (see Topic 1.4), can provide insights into the physical geography, the history, or the culture of a location or region. Closely reviewing maps or listening to how people in a region refer to specific places helps geographers gain insight into the historical, cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic story of a location. For example, in 657 B.C.E., the Greeks founded a

colony that they named Byzantium, after a leader named Byzas. When the city fell under Roman control, it was remained Constantinople, after the Roman emperor Constantine. When the Turks seized the city in 1453, they started to call it Istanbul, which means “to the city.” Geographers look for clues as to why a place may have multiple names depending on who you ask and the point in history.

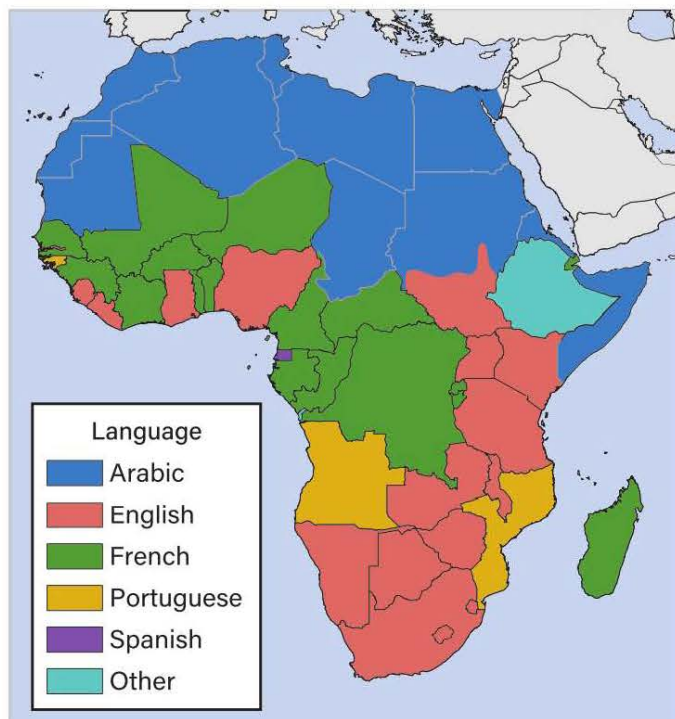
## Official Languages

While the United States does not have an **official language**, one designated by law to be the language of government, some countries do. These countries can be grouped into three categories:

- Some countries are **homogeneous**, or made up largely of ethnically similar people, such as in Iceland, Japan, or Slovenia.
- Some countries use language to discourage people from maintaining a traditional culture. English colonizers did this in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales to promote quick assimilation.
- Some countries include several large ethnic groups. These countries want to honor all groups equally. For example, Zimbabwe is home to several large ethnic groups, so it has 16 official languages. People use English as a lingua franca to make communication easier.

English is the most common official language in the world with 64 countries, followed by French (32), Arabic (27), Spanish (23), and Portuguese (10). Official language does not necessarily mean the most spoken language in a country.

### EXAMPLES OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN AFRICA



The map above represents some but not all official languages in Africa. Using the map describe the distribution pattern of each language shown. What does Ethiopia having an “Other” language tell you about its political history?



## Ethnic and Universalizing Religious

Religion is intertwined with all other aspects of history and geography because, compared to other aspects of culture, it is relatively resistant to decay over time and distance. For example, descendants of immigrants often adopt a new language but continue to practice the faith of their ancestors and remain **adherents**, or believers in their faith. Developing strong mental maps of the origins, diffusion, and distribution of major religions and their divisions is one of the most valuable ways to understand culture.

**Ethnic religions** are belief traditions that emphasize strong cultural characteristics among their followers. In most cases, adherents of an ethnic religion are born or adopted into it. Members have a shared historical experience or struggle that creates strong bonds. Ethnic religions rarely recruit new followers actively. Rather, they spread as a result of relocation diffusion. Hinduism and Judaism are the world's two most widespread ethnic religions. The Jewish Diaspora and global migration of Hindus from India are examples of such relocation diffusion.

In contrast to an ethnic religion, a **universal religion** actively seeks converts to its faith regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Universalizing religions are open to all people regardless of their ethnicity, language, social status or nationality. The major universalizing religions of the world are Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Sikhism is also considered universalizing but has a much more limited geographic diffusion. Universalizing religions have spread far from their original hearths because existing members feel a mandate to spread their beliefs to others. To carry out this mandate, members of universalizing religions often serve as missionaries who both perform charitable works and convert non-believers.

### *Eastern Religions*

Several belief systems have developed in Asia. Of these, two developed in India and have diffused to other places from there.

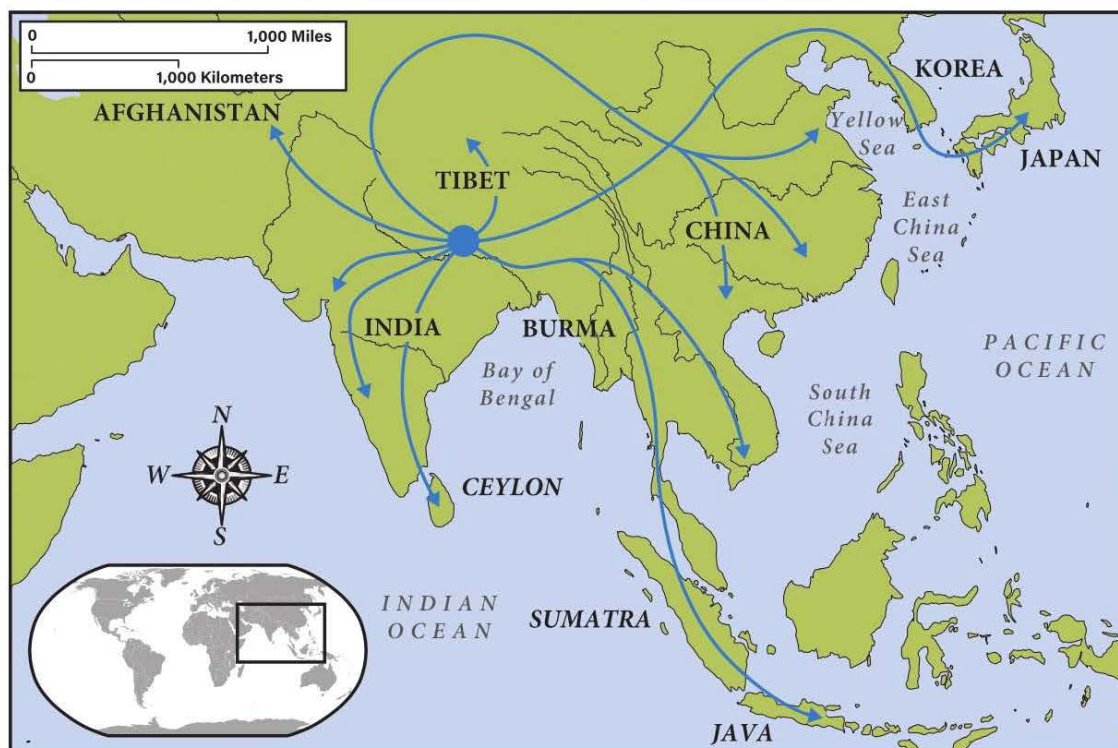
**Hinduism** Classified as an ethnic religion, Hinduism includes the worship of many deities, so most scholars consider it **polytheistic**, which means having many gods. However, Hindus consider all deities as manifestations of one god, so it can be considered **monotheistic**, which means having one god. Hindus believe in **karma**—the idea that behaviors have consequences in the present life or a future life—and in **dharma**—which means the righteous path. For part of its history, Hinduism worked closely with a **caste system**, a rigid class structure, that shaped Indian society. The concept of reincarnation or rebirth based on the quality of life a person lived is a central belief of most Hindus. A soul would spiritually advance enough to become liberated from this cycle of death and rebirth. Rivers are considered sacred and symbolic of life and purification of sin.

**Buddhism** Buddhism grew out of the teachings of a prince named Siddhartha who lived around 600 B.C.E. Accepting many beliefs of Hinduism but rejecting the caste system, Siddhartha became known as the Buddha, or



“enlightened one.” According to Buddhist traditions, Siddhartha had been meditating for several days underneath a bodhi tree when he finally understood the cause of suffering and how to end it. Buddhist doctrines became summarized in the Four Noble Truths, which sought to eliminate desire and suffering by following the Eightfold Path. Siddhartha advised followers to escape the cycle of suffering through “right” views, hopes, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and meditation. This path requires an individual to meditate, reflect, and refrain from excessive earthly pleasures. The goal is, over time, to achieve enlightenment and the peaceful bliss known as nirvana, which would end the cycle of reincarnation.

### THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM



The hearth and diffusion routes of Buddhism

**Sikhism** A relatively new universalizing monotheistic faith, Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in the Punjab region that crosses the border of India and Pakistan during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Most Sikhs live on the Indian side of the border and enjoy more religious freedom than those of other religions in the area. The faith stresses serving others, honesty, hard work, and generosity rather than rituals. All men who are baptized add the name Singh (lion) and women add the name Kaur (princess). This practice was adopted to break down the influence of family names and the caste system in India in order to create a more equal society. A Sikh's place of worship is called a **gurdwara** and followers usually attend a service once a week. All gurdwaras have a worship gathering space and contain a food kitchen that serves meals to people of all faiths. The most holy place is the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India.





**Source:** Wikimedia Commons

Sikh pilgrim at the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, India

## ***Middle Eastern Religions***

Three major religions trace their history to Abraham. He was a religious leader who lived in the Middle East around 1800 B.C.E.

**Judaism** Judaism was among the first monotheistic faiths. Jews believe that the writing known as the Torah expresses divine will. It is supplemented by other writings as well as unwritten laws and customs. For the past 2,000 years, most Jews lived in Europe and North Africa. Always a small minority, they often suffered persecution. In the late 1800s, Jews searching for religious liberty began efforts to establish a homeland in the Middle East and began their migration to the United States. During World War II, the systematic murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany, an event known as the Holocaust, strengthened the movement to create a predominantly Jewish state in the Middle East. In 1948, the country of Israel was formed. Jews from around the world migrated there.

**Christianity** Christianity began when followers of a Jewish teacher, Jesus (c. 4 B.C.E. to c. 30 C.E.), evolved into their own religion based on the belief that Jesus was the son of God and the savior of humans. He emphasized the importance of faith, love, and peace. Christianity spread outward from the Middle East to become the dominant religion in Europe, and then to America and other parts of the world.

There are three main branches of Christianity—Roman Catholic, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox—with hundreds of further subdivisions. Strong patterns associated with language help to explain in part the geographic distribution of both religion and language. Many Catholics trace their heritage or colonial history to regions that spoke Romance languages such as French, Spanish, or

Portuguese. Protestants often have a similar history with northern European and Germanic languages like English. And many eastern European countries have a complex religious history related to a mix of Eastern Orthodox, Judaism, and Islam. While Christianity diffused primarily west, north, and east from its hearth in Israel, in one unique case it diffused south. In Ethiopia, Christianity attracted many adherents.

**Islam** Islam is the religion followed by Muslims. Muslims believe that Allah—the Arabic word for God—revealed his teachings to humans through a series of prophets. The last of these was Muhammad, who lived in what is now Saudi Arabia in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries C.E.

Muslims believe that Allah communicated his teachings to Muhammad, who shared them with people in the book of holy writings known as the Quran. The core principles of the Quran became known as the Five Pillars of Islam:

- belief in one god—Allah
- ritual prayer
- almsgiving (giving of wealth or volunteering for charitable causes)
- fasting (abstaining from food or drink)
- pilgrimage to Mecca

Muslims evolved a law code based on the Quran, called sharia, to regulate religious and civic behavior. Sharia made no distinction between religious and civil law and countries that operate under it are considered theocracies. (See Topic 3.3.)

The two major subdivisions of Islam are the Sunni (90 percent of adherents) and Shia (10 percent of adherents). Countries with the highest Shia populations are Iran, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, and other countries in the Middle East and Africa.

**Diffusion and Pilgrimage** The two largest universalizing religions are Christianity and Islam. Each spread from their hearths partially through conquest and colonization.

Christianity, which was found mostly in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, added millions of followers when Christian missionaries accompanied European explorers and conquerors to the Western Hemisphere, southern Africa, and Australia. As Europeans expanded their empires, they converted people to Christianity, sometimes forcefully.

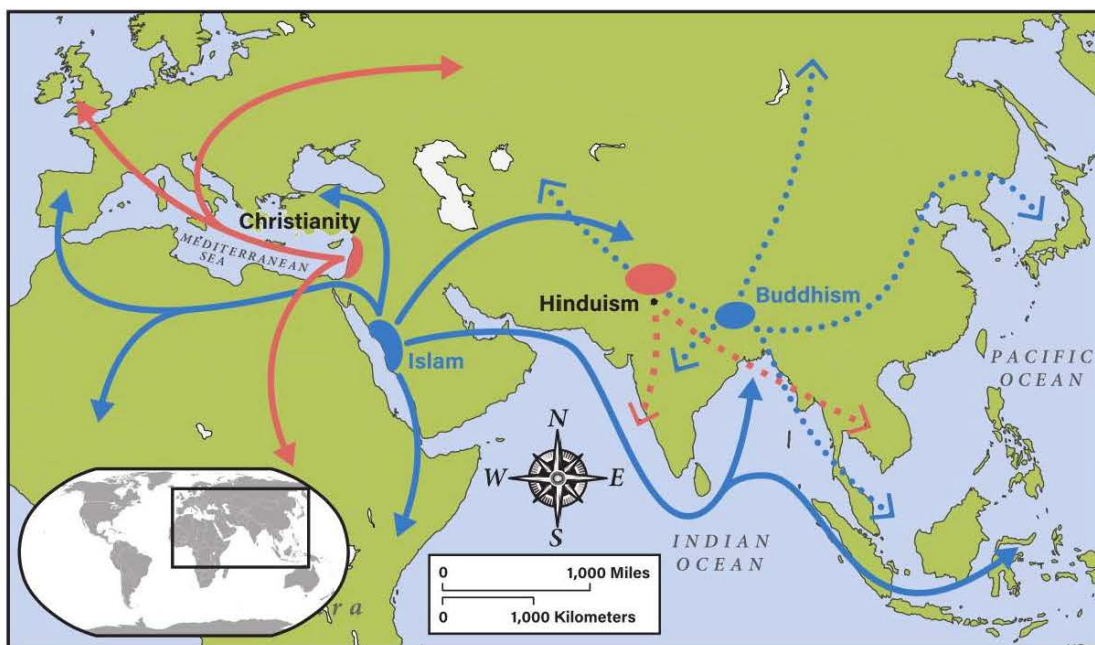
Islam spread in much the same way, through the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia. Today, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world based on natural increase.

In many faith traditions, followers feel called to go on a **pilgrimage**, a religious journey taken by a person to a sacred place of his or her religion. Each year, over 20 million Hindus journey to the Ganges River, millions of Muslims travel to Mecca (a pilgrimage known as a *hajj*), and many Muslims, Jews, and Christians visit Jerusalem's many holy sites.



RELIGIOUS HEARTHS AND DIFFUSION		
Religion (number of adherents)	Hearth	Type of Diffusion
<b>Hinduism</b> (1.1 billion)	Along Indus River in present-day Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expansion diffusion across Indian subcontinent</li> <li>Relocation diffusion in recent decades to Europe and the United States</li> </ul>
<b>Buddhism</b> (500 million)	South Asia in present-day Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contagious diffusion as teachings spread throughout East and Southeast Asia along land and water trading routes</li> <li>Relocation diffusion throughout the world</li> </ul>
<b>Sikhism</b> (20 million)	Punjab (crosses border of India and Pakistan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contagious diffusion via conversion</li> <li>Relocation diffusion mostly within the former British Empire and the United States</li> </ul>
<b>Judaism</b> (15 million)	Eastern Mediterranean and southwestern Asia; present-day Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relocation diffusion throughout North Africa and Europe forced by the Romans beginning around 70 C.E.</li> <li>Relocation diffusion to the United States and other countries including return migration to Israel post-1948</li> </ul>
<b>Christianity</b> (2.3 billion)	Eastern Mediterranean and southwestern Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contagious diffusion via conversion and missionaries through the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia</li> <li>Hierarchical diffusion through conversion of rulers, who then forced their followers to adopt the faith</li> <li>Expansion and relocation diffusion throughout the world via imperialism and colonialism</li> </ul>
<b>Islam</b> (1.8 billion)	Southwest Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contagious diffusion by trade and conquest to Spain, Africa, and much of Asia</li> <li>Relocation diffusion throughout the world</li> </ul>

## DIFFUSION OF RELIGIONS



The map above show the historical diffusion of the four largest religions. The map does not show the global spread of Christianity during the European Imperialism and Colonialism period.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *What factors led to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions?*

Universalizing and Ethnic Religions	Types of Diffusion

### KEY TERMS

linguists	Hinduism
language tree	polytheistic
Indo-European language family	monotheistic
Romance languages	karma
isoglosses	caste system
dialects	Buddhism
adages	Sikhism
toponyms	gurdwara
official language	Judaism
homogeneous	Christianity
adherents	Islam
ethnic religions	pilgrimage
universal religion	



## Effects of Diffusion

**Essential Question:** How does the process of diffusion change the cultural landscape?

Cultural diffusion changes the cultural landscape and can be a source of controversy. One assumption is that globalization would result in **homogenization** of cultures, or making people of different places more alike. Theories about the effects of homogenization include losses of indigenous languages, religious practices, unique architectural styles, artistic expression, etc. People in some places respond to globalization in ways quite different from those of people in other places. They adopt and adapt some practices into their local culture while rejecting other aspects.

Smartphones and texting provide a good example of local adaptations. Texters in different countries have developed different shortcuts to lessen the number of keystrokes or to express emotions. For example, someone in the United States might use :) to represent a smiling face, while a person in Korea would use ^^.

### Contact Between Cultures

Diffusion describes the ways cultures spread. As they spread, they come into contact with other cultures. The interaction of cultures is one of the driving forces in human history, and it can have several types of results, ranging from a person fully adopting the culture to picking up several cultural traits to acquiring no traits.

### Acculturation

Often, an ethnic or immigrant group moving to a new area adopts the values and practices of the larger group that has received them, while still maintaining valuable elements of their own culture. This is called **acculturation**. For example, in the 1880s, the Syndergaard family migrated from Denmark to the United States, settling in a Danish enclave in Iowa. The mother and father gave most of their ten children common Danish names, such as Inger and Niels. They commonly ate Danish foods, including spherical pancakes called *abelskivver*. Within three generations, their descendants still ate abelskivver, but they had names common in U.S. culture, such as Susan, Jim, and Dave.

Another example of acculturation occurs when children or families speak Spanish or another native language at home but at school or work, they speak English. Acculturation is one reason why so many immigrants are multilingual.

## Assimilation

Unlike acculturation, **assimilation** happens when an ethnic group can no longer be distinguished from the receiving group. This often occurs as ethnic groups become more affluent and leave their ethnic areas. Complete assimilation rarely happens, though. Usually, the one trait that is retained the longest is religion. For example, the grandchildren of immigrants from India might no longer speak Hindi or eat traditional Indian cuisine daily, but they might still practice their Hindu faith. Commonly, the third and fourth generations of an ethnic group display a resurgence in ethnic pride by organizing festivals, learning their ethnic language, and revitalizing ethnic neighborhoods.

## Syncretism

The fusion or blending of two distinctive cultural traits into a unique new hybrid trait is called **syncretism**. This process results in new practices, beliefs, innovations, and traits within a society and ultimately results in changes to culture. This process is most likely to occur when different cultures are in proximity to each other and can occur via immigration, marriage between two groups, conquest, or simple creativity. One example is the blending of American fast food with cuisine from another culture, such as Taco Bell or Panda Express. Another example is the blending of snow skiing with inspiration from skateboarding and surfing, resulting in snowboarding. Holidays, such as Christmas, are a blending of a German tradition (decorating a tree), a Turkish belief (St. Nick—Santa Claus), a Christian doctrine (birth of Jesus), and American commercialism.

Most religions and languages are modified or blended as groups of people interact and create new meanings and traditions that reflect elements of multiple cultures. Additionally, music styles are often syncretic. Contemporary hip-hop freestyle rapping was influenced by Black jazz musicians of the 1930s and 1940s. Their willingness to improvise and create new rhythmic beats freely while playing allowed creativity and expression of culture and emotion. Hip-hop rappers incorporated this jazz freestyle rhythm and on-the-fly rhyming into their stories and poetic songs to express their views of inner-city America.

**Glocalization** is a form of syncretism that involves the creation of products or services for the global market by adapting them to local cultures. An example would be how McDonald's created the McCafé idea of designer coffees and pastries to attract customers in France. This blended model of fast food and coffee was so successful it diffused back to the United States market.

## Multiculturalism

Without full assimilation, most receiving societies, such as the United States, are characterized by **multiculturalism**, the coexistence of several cultures in one society with the ideal of all cultures being valued and worthy of study. A major idea of multiculturalism is that the interaction of cultures enriches the lives of all.



Foods commonly eaten in the United States demonstrate the benefits of multiculturalism. Many foods introduced by one specific cultural group became common in the diet of people of all cultural groups:

- Corn, tomatoes, and potatoes come from indigenous American groups.
- Peanuts were first grown in South America and rice was first grown in China, but both entered the North American diet by way of Africa.
- Bagels were first made by Jews in eastern Europe.

## Nativism

However, coexistence of cultures can also bring conflicts, as people and groups with different values, beliefs, and customs often clash. Minority groups can face prejudice and discrimination. Refugees hoping to settle in the United States after fleeing Syria at the outbreak of the 2011 civil war faced opposition from Americans who feared that some refugees might be terrorists.

In some cases, the conflict between two cultures becomes harsh. **Nativist**, or anti-immigrant, attitudes may form among the cultural majority, sometimes bringing violence and government actions against the immigrant or minority group. Often, nativist attitudes are directed toward one particular group. For example, from the mid-1800s through the early 1900s, many native-born Protestants in the United States were strongly opposed to Roman Catholic immigrants from Ireland, Italy, Poland, and other countries. Mexican Americans and other immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries have often faced opposition from nativist groups.

Other times, nativism reflects a general dislike of people from other countries, or xenophobia. A more contemporary example is the poor reception that Syrian refugees experienced in some European countries. Many Europeans feared the introduction of non-European languages, religions, and cultural practices of the largely Muslim Syrian refugee population.

### REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

**Essential Question:** *How does the process of diffusion change the cultural landscape?*

List of the Effects of Diffusion of Culture	Explanation of the Effects of Diffusion of Culture

### KEY TERMS

homogenization  
acculturation  
assimilation  
syncretism

glocalization  
multiculturalism  
nativist

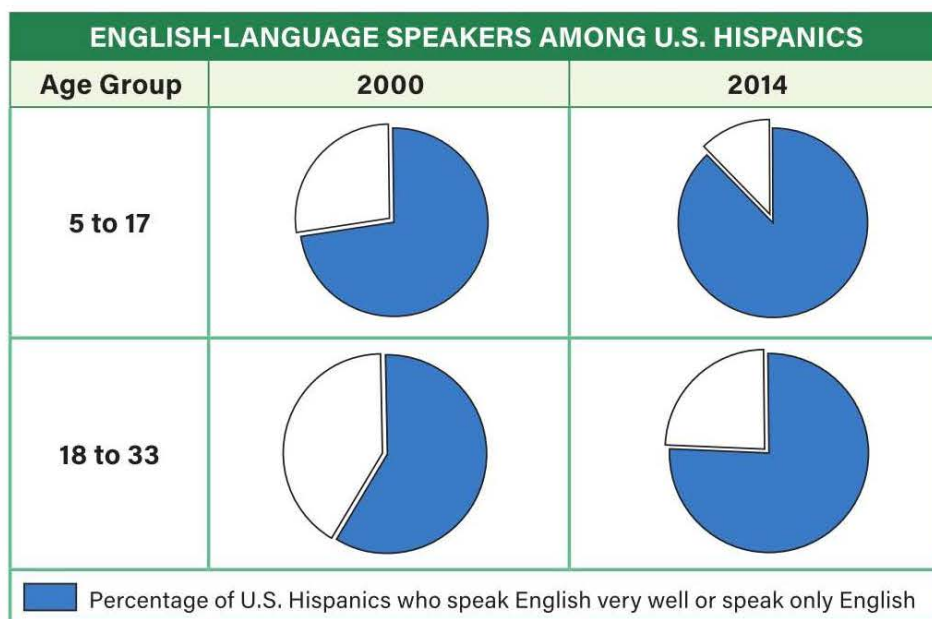


## GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES: SPANISH AT VARIOUS SCALES

What defines the region of the United States where Spanish is widely spoken? Geographers answer this question using various tools, such as census data, surveys, and the cultural landscape. They have found that the Spanish-speaking region changes depending on the level of analysis.

### Spanish at the Country and U.S. State Scale

The United States includes more than 41 million people who grew up speaking primarily Spanish, and another 11 million bilingual people. On a cartogram showing the total number of Spanish speakers in a country, the United States would be the second-largest country in the world; only Mexico would be larger.



**Source:** Pew Research Center of data from the 2014 American Community Survey and the 2000 Census (IPUMS).

At the state level, the answer is slightly more complex. States vary, generally according to history and relative location. States with the highest percentages of Spanish-speaking Americans were all once colonies of Spain and are located close to Latin America: California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida.

### Spanish at the Local Scale

At the county level, the issue becomes even more complex. Large cities throughout the country have large populations of residents who speak Spanish as either a first or second language. The Chicago metropolitan area has more Spanish speakers than the entire populations of either New Mexico or Arizona. In addition, scattered counties around the country, from southern Idaho to eastern North Carolina, each have at least 7 percent of their population who speak Spanish.

1. Using the concept of scale, explain how the United States is labeled on a map as a majority English-speaking country but is still the country with the second-most Spanish speakers in the world.
2. What are trends related to the change in English-language speakers among Hispanics in the United States?





## THINK AS A GEOGRAPHER: LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS IN NEW YORK

The connection between language and culture is often very close. However, it is often not identical. When immigrants come to the United States, they often lose their ancestral language but keep elements of their ancestral culture. The reverse can also occur: people might continue to worship in their traditional language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, or Greek, but also speak English, watch baseball, and eat apple pie.

New York City, a magnet for immigrants from around the world, includes native speakers of every major language. These speakers form networks among each other and with overseas communities. English and Spanish are widely spoken, but neighborhoods are often pockets of speakers of other languages. Look at the data in the chart below.

NEW YORK CITY LANGUAGES	
Language	Number of Speakers in New York City
English	3,700,000
Spanish	1,870,000
Chinese	419,000
South Asian Languages (Hindi, Urdu, and Others)	200,000
Russian	186,000
French Creole	106,000
Yiddish	85,000
French	81,000

1. Based on the languages spoken in other parts of the world, with which parts would New York City have the strongest network?
2. Explain how English creates a network in New York City by serving as a lingua franca.
3. What evidence would you look for in the cultural landscape to see whether you were in a neighborhood where a language other than English is widely used?

# CHAPTER 7 REVIEW:

## Historical and Contemporary Processes of Diffusion

### *Topics 3.5–3.8*

#### MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

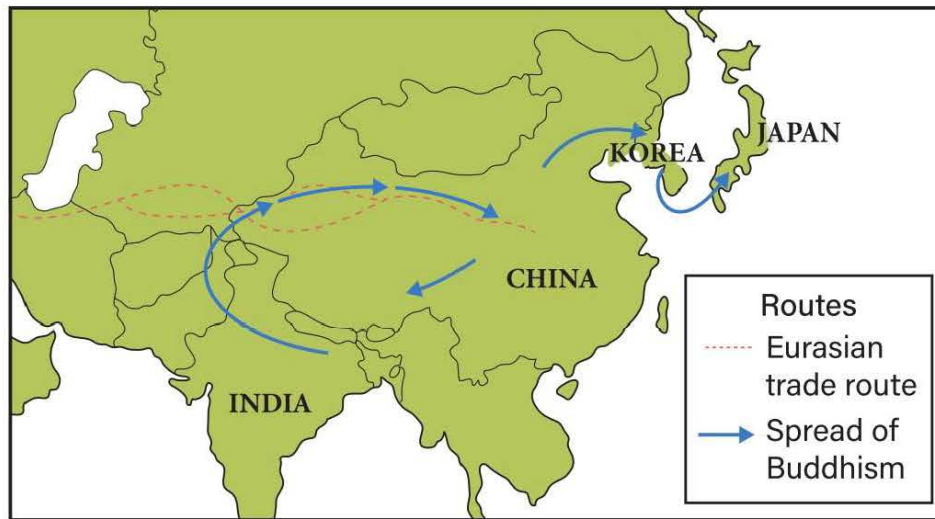
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1. Some countries have several official languages because they want to
  - (A) make international diplomacy easier
  - (B) foster political cooperation with neighboring countries
  - (C) make government operate more efficiently
  - (D) prepare students to participate in the global economy
  - (E) give recognition to different groups within the country
2. Which statement best describes the most common reason groups wish to preserve their traditional languages?
  - (A) Language is central to cultural identity, so preserving a language helps preserve a culture.
  - (B) Language is used in religious services, so preserving a language is primarily a religious obligation.
  - (C) Language is used for trade, so preserving language is one way to keep a group economically prosperous.
  - (D) Language change is a politically disruptive force, so preserving a language is one way to keep stability.
  - (E) Language preservation passes on a group's history, so preserving a language is the only way to record history accurately.
3. The Arabic language spread from its hearth and became one of the major global languages mainly through
  - (A) increased use of communication technology in Arab nations
  - (B) spread of Middle Eastern multinational oil corporations
  - (C) worldwide colonization beginning around 600 C.E.
  - (D) conquest and its use as a standard religious language
  - (E) resisting colonization by European nations and the United States



Question 4 refers to the map below.

#### DIFFUSION OF BUDDHISM OUT OF INDIA



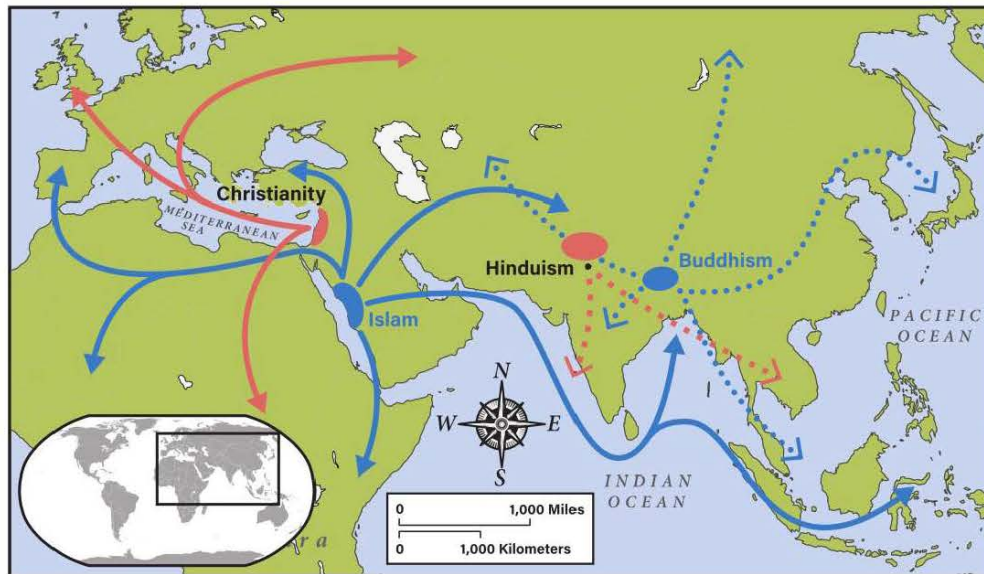
4. Which general conclusion about the expansion diffusion of the religion does the map most strongly support?
- (A) It requires mass migrations of people over long distances.
  - (B) It usually moves in an eastward direction.
  - (C) It is aided by the presence of a major trade route.
  - (D) It occurs more in Asia than on other continents.
  - (E) It experiences strong fundamentalism at its hearth.
5. Which was the most common religious change among Africans as a result of contact with people from Europe and the Middle East?
- (A) Animism to a universalizing religion
  - (B) An ethnic religion to animism
  - (C) A universalizing religion to an ethnic religion
  - (D) Monotheism to polytheism
  - (E) Polytheism to an ethnic religion
6. Which type of influence has been most significant in shaping the distribution of religious groups in the United States?
- (A) Climate and landforms
  - (B) Immigration patterns
  - (C) Federal government policies
  - (D) Economic development
  - (E) Shifts in agriculture

7. Which of the following is NOT a factor that has encouraged globalization?
- (A) Technological advances in communication and transportation
  - (B) Increased business costs
  - (C) The quest for global markets associated with capitalism
  - (D) An increase in the flows of financial capital
  - (E) Governmental policies

### FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION

1. Two major religious hearths in the world are Southwest Asia and South Asia. Religions diffused from these regions to many others. Use the map below to answer the questions that follow.

**THE DIFFUSION OF FOUR RELIGIONS**



- (A) Identify ONE religion that originated in Southwest Asia and a country today where the majority of people follow the religion.
- (B) Identify ONE religion that originated in South Asia and a country in the world today where the majority of people follow the religion.
- (C) Describe the difference between universalizing and ethnic religions.
- (D) Explain how hierarchical diffusion helped the spread of Christianity.
- (E) Describe how relocation diffusion explains the spread of either Hinduism or Judaism.
- (F) Identify the scale of analysis of the map shown and describe ONE limitation of the map.
- (G) Describe ONE specific way that when a religion diffuses to a new area it can change the cultural landscape.



# UNIT 3 REVIEW: +

## Connecting Course Skills and Content

### APPLYING GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS

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

- 1C** Compare and contrast the three types of expansion diffusion.
- 2A** Describe the spatial patterns, networks, and relationships of a major language and religion.
- 3E** Using the data table in Topic 3.5, describe the geographic processes that explain why Spain’s population (47 million) differs from the number of Spanish-speaking people worldwide (570 million).
- 4A** Using three visual images from Unit 3, identify different types of information presented in each source.
- 5B** Explain how a location’s cultural region (language, religion etc.) can change depending on the scale of analysis. Cite at least three levels of scale to support your response.



### WRITE AS A GEOGRAPHER: WRITE IN COMPLETE THOUGHTS

A response to a free-response question should be more than just a list of unrelated points. Each point should be stated clearly in one or more sentences that each express a complete thought. Related sentences should be linked with words such as “for example,” “as a result,” and “in the next stage” that make the relationship between ideas clear. Together, all of the sentences should work together to form a larger complete thought that answers the question.

*For each word, write one or two sentences that demonstrate how that word might be used in answering a free-response question about categories of religion.*

- |                 |                   |                |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. monotheistic | 3. fundamentalism | 5. universal   |
| 2. polytheistic | 4. ethnic         | 6. theocracies |

*Write a sentence that includes each pair of words or phrases and states a clear relationship between the concepts.*

- 7. Jewish Diaspora; relocation diffusion
- 8. sharia; religious law
- 9. universalizing religions; members feel a mandate
- 10. Mecca, Jerusalem, Lhasa (Tibet); sacred space