

Chapter

7 Ethnicities

KEY ISSUE 1

Where Are Ethnicities Distributed?

The geographic distribution of ethnicities is initially considered in this chapter. Ethnic groups are tied to particular places because members of the group, or their ancestors, were born or raised there. Another important consideration here is ethnic conflict in specific areas of the world. The attempt to retain distinct ethnic identity is one example of the preservation of local diversity.

Learning Outcome 7.1.1: Identify and describe the major ethnicities in the United States.

The three most numerous ethnicities are Hispanics, African Americans, and Asian Americans.

Learning Outcome 7.1.2: Describe the distribution of major U.S. ethnicities among states and within urban areas.

Hispanics are clustered in the Southwest, African Americans in the Southeast, and Asian Americans in the West. African Americans and Hispanics are highly clustered in urban areas, especially in inner-city neighborhoods.

Ethnicity comes from the Greek root *ethnos*, which means *national*. Ethnicity is identity with a group of people who share a common identity with a specific homeland or hearth. It is distinct from **race**, which is identity with a group of people who share a biological ancestor. Biological classification by race is the basis for **racism**, which is the belief that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race. A **racist** is someone who follows the beliefs of racism. The characteristics of ethnicity derive from the distinctive features of specific geographic locations whereas those of race are not rooted in particular places.

The two most numerous ethnicities in the United States are Hispanics (or Latinos), at 15% of total population, and African Americans at 13%. About 4% are Asian-American and 1% American Indian. At a regional scale African-Americans are clustered in the Southeast, Hispanics in the Southwest, Asian-Americans in the West, and American Indians in the Southwest and Plains states. At the urban level African Americans and Hispanics are highly clustered in **ethnic neighborhoods**, especially in northern cities. At the same time these cities are also **multicultural**.

Discrimination by race was the cornerstone of the South African legal system of apartheid. **Apartheid** was the physical separation of different races into separate geographic areas. It was instituted by the white racist Afrikaners government in 1948, and was particularly designed to subjugate the black majority by forcing them to live in impoverished homelands. The apartheid laws were repealed in the 1990s, but although South Africa now has black majority rule, it will take many years to redress their geographic impact.

Three major migration patterns have shaped the present distribution of African Americans within the United States. The first was the forced migration from Africa that was part of the **triangular slave trade**. After slavery most African Americans remained in the rural South working as **sharecroppers**, farming land rented from a landowner and paying rent in the form of crops. Blacks were still separated from whites in the South through laws that followed the Supreme Court's "separate but equal" treatment of the races. The second major migration pattern was the migration to northern cities from the beginning of the twentieth century. In these cities, African American immigrants lived in **ghettos**, named for the term for neighborhoods where Jews were forced to live in medieval Europe. Segregation laws were eliminated during the 1950s and 1960s. The third migration pattern was their movement from ghettos into neighborhoods immediately adjacent during this time. This was made possible by "white flight" to the suburbs, which in turn was encouraged by **blockbusting**, where real estate agents convinced white homeowners living near a black area to sell their houses at low prices.

KEY ISSUE 2

Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?

Learning Outcome 7.2.1: Describe the patterns of forced and voluntary migration of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans to the United States.

Many African Americans trace their ancestry to forced migration from Africa for slavery.

Many Hispanics and Asian Americans trace their heritage to people who migrated in the late twentieth century for economic prospects and political freedom.

Learning Outcome 7.2.2: Describe the patterns of migration of African Americans within the United States.

African Americans migrated in large numbers from the South to the North and West in the early twentieth century. African Americans clustered in inner-city ghettos that have expanded in recent decades.

Learning Outcome 7.2.3: Explain the laws once used to segregate races in the United States and South Africa.

Segregation of races was legal in the United States and South Africa until the late twentieth century.

Nationality, which comes from the Latin word *nasci*, meaning *to have been born*, is identity with a group of people who share legal attachment and personal allegiance to a country. The desire for self-rule or **self-determination** has transformed ethnic groups into nationalities. A **nation-state** is a state whose territory corresponds to that occupied by a particular ethnicity. There are numerous nation-states in Europe including France, Slovenia, and Denmark. However no nation-state consists entirely of people from the same ethnic group. For example there are some German speakers in Denmark, and some Danish speakers in Germany.

Nationalism refers to the degree of loyalty that one has for a nationality. This could be instilled by promoting symbols of nationalism such as flags and songs. Nationalism is an example of a **centripetal force**, which is one that tends to unify people behind the state. **Centrifugal forces** do exactly the opposite and may lead to the breakup of a state.

Multiethnic states contain more than one dominant ethnicity. For example Belgium is divided

among the Dutch-speaking Flemish and the French-speaking Walloons. They are also called **multinational states**, and each ethnic group will generally recognize each other as distinct nationalities. This is true of the United Kingdom today with its four major nationalities—English, Welsh, Scottish, and (northern) Irish. All four field their own national soccer teams. The former Soviet Union was the largest multinational state with 15 republics that represented many different ethnic groups. Now they are independent states in the Baltic, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. There are geopolitical problems in the Caucasus because the boundaries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia do not completely match the territories occupied by these ethnicities. For example there are minorities of Armenians in Azerbaijan and vice versa. Russia is still the largest multinational state with 39 nationalities, many of which, like Chechnya, want to be independent.

There has been a resurgence of ethnic identity and nationalism in Eastern Europe since the 1980s. Prior to the 1980s this was effectively suppressed by communist control. This has led to the breakup of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, and the emergence of smaller nation-states. Slovenia is a good example of a nation-state that emerged from the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Slovenes comprise more than 90% of the population of Slovenia; thus the country is relatively peaceful and stable. These movements for **self-determination** are fueled by **ethnonationalism**, a strong feeling of belonging to a nation that is a minority within a state.

Key Issues Revisited

7.2. Why do ethnicities have distinctive distributions?

- Nationalities are ethnic groups that are attached and loyal to a particular country
- Nationality combines an ethnic group's language, religion, history, and other patriotic events
- Many countries have been created in an attempt to transform single ethnic groups into single nationalities

In some countries ethnicities within a state will compete to dominate the national identity of that state. This will often result in civil war. This has been the case in a number of countries in the Horn of Africa. Eritrean rebels fought against the Ethiopian army in the early 1990s and became the independent state of Eritrea in 1993. There has been conflict between the two over the location of the border since that time. There has been civil war in Sudan for decades between the Christian and animist rebels in the south and the Arab-Muslim dominated government forces in the north. Now there is ethnic war in the western-most Darfur region. Somalia is a country in turmoil because of conflict between the six major ethnic groups, known as clans.

In the Middle East Lebanon has experienced civil war because of ethnic and religious divisions. The country is comprised of numerous Christian sects as well as Muslims belonging to both the Shiite and Sunni sects. The island country of Sri Lanka has been torn by fighting between the Sinhalese Buddhists who speak an Indo-European language and the Tamil Hindus who speak a Dravidian language. The long war between the ethnicities ended in 2009 with the defeat of the Tamil.

Conflicts also arise when one ethnicity is split among more than one country. For example there have been major ethnic disputes between India and Pakistan since these countries became independent from Britain in 1947. Even though there was massive forced migration at the time of independence, there are still minorities of Hindus in Pakistan and minorities of Muslims in India. In addition, the two countries never agreed on the location of their boundary in the northern region of Kashmir.

Key Issues Revisited

7.3. Why do conflicts arise among ethnicities?

- Conflicts can develop when a country contains several ethnicities that vie for political control
- Conflicts can also develop when an ethnicity is divided among more than one country

Throughout history conflict between ethnic groups has led to forced migration. **Ethnic cleansing** is the process by which a more powerful ethnic group forcibly removes a less powerful one in order to create their own nation or nation-state. The case of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a classic recent example. Bosnia was the most multiethnic republic of former Yugoslavia. At the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s the population of Bosnia consisted of 48% Bosnian Muslim, 37% Serb, and 14% Croat. Serbs and Croats fought to unite their ethnicity in Bosnia with their respective republics; this is called **irredentism**. The Serbs in Bosnia were **irredenta** of Serbia. To do this they both engaged in ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims.

After the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia remained a multiethnic state. In fact their southern **province** of Kosovo is 90% ethnic Albanian. Serbia launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing of the Albanian majority. Eventually Serbia withdrew its troops from Kosovo as a result of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air attack. Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008.

The Balkans has always been a region of ethnic conflict. Indeed the term **balkanized** is used to describe a geographic area that cannot be organized into one or more stable states. **Balkanization** is the process by which a state breaks down through ethnic conflict. The region is also referred to as a **shatter-belt** for the same reasons.

Ethnic cleansing led to **genocide** in Rwanda in the 1990s because of longstanding conflict between the Hutus and the Tutsis. The Hutus were farmers and the Tutsis were cattle herders. Historically the Tutsi took control and made the Hutus their serfs. The region was colonized by the Belgians and Germans and shortly before independence in 1962 Hutus killed or ethnically cleansed most of the Tutsis. The 1994 ethnic cleansing and genocide was when Tutsis defeated the Hutu army and killed half a million Hutus. This conflict has spilled into neighboring countries, especially the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the region is still very unstable because of ethnic conflict.

1. Define: Ethnicity –
2. What is racism?
3. Where do the characteristics of ethnicity derive from?
4. List the FOUR most numerous ethnicities in the US along with percentage of total population and distribution:

Ethnicity	% of total population	Distribution (within the US)

5. At the urban level, where are African Americans and Hispanics highly clustered?
6. Define: Apartheid –
7. List AND thoroughly describe the THREE major migration patterns that have shaped the present distribution of African Americans within the United States:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
8. Define: Ghettos –
9. Define: Blockbusting –

10. Review Question 7.1.1. The most important feature of race that geographers look at is
- A. skin color
 - B. hair type
 - C. hair color
 - D. blood type
 - E. facial features
11. Review Question 7.1.2. At what scale would the distribution of African Americans and Hispanics be most notable because they are so clustered together?
- A. local scale
 - B. regional scale
 - C. county scale
 - D. state scale
 - E. national scale
12. Define: Nationality –
13. Another name for “self-rule” is _____
14. What is a nation-state?
15. How many nation-states consist entirely of people from the same ethnic group?
16. What is nationalism?
17. Explain (define) the following:
- a. Centripetal Force –
 - b. Centrifugal Force –
18. Explain how Belgium is a good example of a multiethnic state:
19. Explain how the United Kingdom is a good example of a multinational state:
20. Why are there geopolitical problems in the Caucasus Mountains? Provide an example.
- Why?
- Example:

21. Prior to the 1980's, ethnic identity and nationalism was effectively suppressed by _____.

This has led to the breakup of _____, _____, and _____.

22. Define: **Ethnonationalism** –

23. Review Question 7.2.1. What amendment to the Constitution outlawed slavery?

- A. Amendment 19
- B. Amendment 14
- C. Amendment 5
- D. Amendment 13
- E. Amendment 1

24. Review Question 7.2.2. Which group encouraged "white flight?"

- A. the federal government
- B. the state government
- C. real estate agents
- D. scientists
- E. physicians

25. List **THREE** conflicts in Africa which has resulted from ethnic tensions:

- a.
- b.
- c.

26. What **TWO** countries in Asia have experienced civil war because of ethnic and religious divisions?

- a.
- b.

27. Conflicts also arise when one _____ is split among more than one _____.

28. Thoroughly describe an example of the conflict mentioned in question #27.

29. Review Question 7.3.1. Nationalities share all BUT which of the following?

- A. passports
- B. voting
- C. civic duty
- D. religion
- E. loyalty

30. Review Question 7.3.2. Most Maronite Christians live in
- A. Israel
 - B. Lebanon
 - C. Jordan
 - D. Kuwait
 - E. Syria
31. Throughout history, conflict between ethnic groups has led to _____.
32. Define: Ethnic Cleansing –
33. Thoroughly explain the recent example of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
34. Define: Irredentism –
35. Which former southern province of Serbia declared independence in 2008?
36. Define: Balkanized –
37. Define: Balkanization –
38. What is genocide?
39. Where in Africa was there a genocide during the 1990's?
40. What are the TWO major ethnic groups in Rwanda?
41. Review Question 7.4.1. Which group practiced ethnic cleansing in the village of Golane in Kosovo?
- A. Macedonians
 - B. Bosnians
 - C. Serbians
 - D. Albanians
 - E. Slovenians
42. Review Question 7.4.2. The janjaweed would most likely be found in what area?
- A. Cairo, Egypt
 - B. Damascus, Syria
 - C. Beirut, Lebanon
 - D. Darfur, Sudan
 - E. Rabat, Morocco