

GEOGRAPHIES OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

Mosaic or Melting Pot?

One of the enduring stories that the people of the United States proudly tell themselves is that “ours is an immigrant nation.” This story is on display during annual festivals celebrating the mosaic of ethnic traditions in countless cities, towns, and villages across the nation. For example, the midwestern town of Wilber, settled by Bohemian immigrants beginning about 1865, bills itself as “The Czech Capital of Nebraska” and annually invites visitors to attend a “National Czech Festival.” Celebrants are promised Czech foods, such as *koláče*, *jaternice*, poppy seed cake, and *jelita*; Czech folk dancing; “colored Czech

postcards and souvenirs” imported from Europe; and handicraft items made by Nebraska Czechs (bearing an official seal and trademark to prove authenticity). Thousands of visitors attend the festival each year. Without leaving Nebraska, these tourists can move on to “Norwegian Days” at Newman Grove, the “Greek Festival” at Bridgeport, the Danish “Grundlovs Fest” in Dannebrog, “German Heritage Days” at McCook, the “Swedish Festival” at Stromsburg, the “St. Patrick’s Day Celebration” at O’Neill, several Native American powwows, and assorted other ethnic celebrations (Figure 5.1).



FIGURE 5.1 The town of Stromsburg, Nebraska (left). Proud of its Swedish heritage, Stromsburg holds a Swedish Festival each year in June. **Hispanic Heritage Festival in Nebraska (right).** Hispanic immigrants have expanded the range of ethnic pride festivals throughout the Midwest. (Right: Steve Skjold/Alamy.)

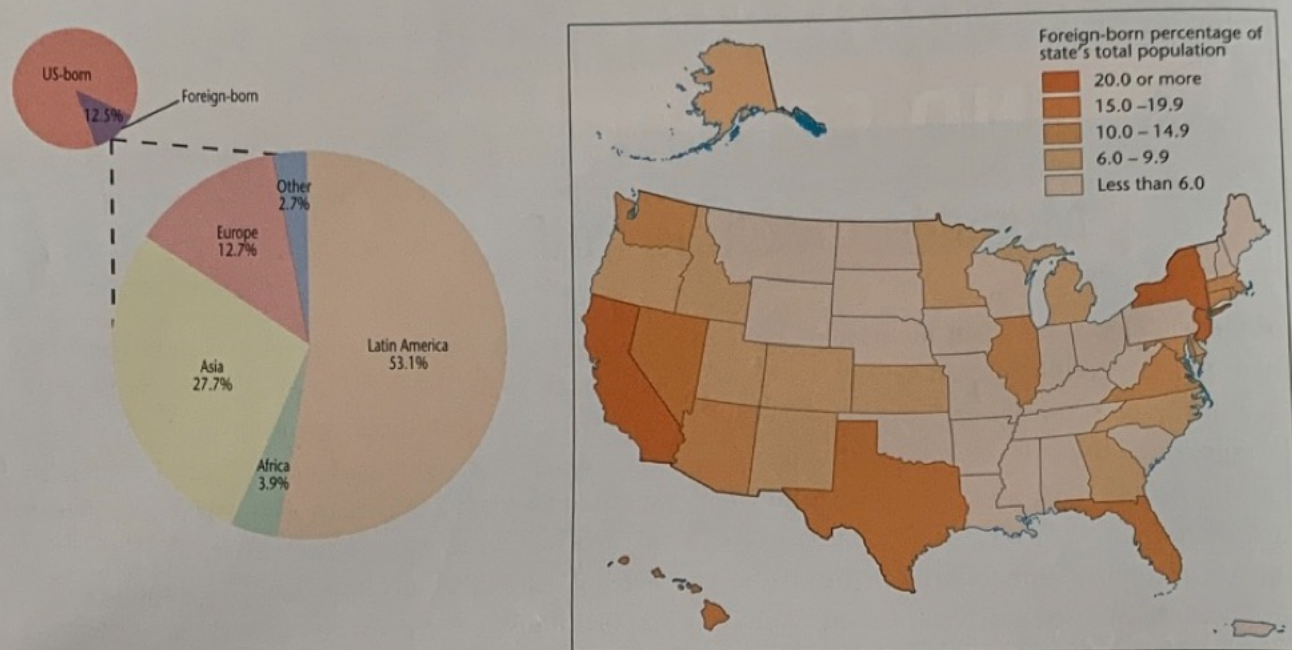


FIGURE 5.2 The foreign-born population of the United States (left). The smaller chart shows that 12.5 percent, or 38.5 million, of the total U.S. population in 2009 was born abroad. The larger chart shows that the majority of these people came from Latin America and Asia. **The foreign-born population by state and Puerto Rico (right).** This map shows where foreign-born people reside throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. (Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009; Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2009.)

Today, Nebraska is still a magnet for immigrants, but since the 1990s, the state's new arrivals have been overwhelmingly non-European. In particular, Mexican immigrants employed in Nebraska's meat-processing industry find destinations such as Nebraska and other upper mid-western states attractive. In general, immigrants to the United States today are more likely to come from Asia or Latin America than from Europe, and they are changing the face of ethnicity in the United States (Figure 5.2). Indeed, ethnicity is a central aspect of the cultural geography of most places, forming one of the brightest motifs in the human mosaic.

Race is often used interchangeably with *ethnicity*, but the two terms have very different meanings, and one must be careful in choosing between them.

Race can be understood as a genetically significant difference among human populations. A few biologists today support the view that human populations do form racially distinct groupings, arguing that race explains phenomena such as the susceptibility to certain diseases. In contrast, many

social scientists (and many biologists) have noted the fluidity of definitions of *race* across time and space, suggesting

that race is a social construct rather than a biological fact (Figures 5.3 and 5.4).

Because race is a social construction, it takes different forms in different places and times. In the United States, for example, the so-called one-drop rule meant that anyone with any African-American ancestry at all was considered black. This law was intended to prevent interracial marriage. It also meant that moving out of the category "black" was, and still is today, extremely difficult because one's racial status is determined by ancestry. Yet the notion that "black blood" somehow makes a person completely black is challenged today by the growing numbers of young people with diverse racial backgrounds. The rise in interracial marriages in the United States, along with the fact that—for the first time in 2000—one could declare multiple races on the census form, means that more and more people identify themselves as "racially mixed" or "biracial" instead of feeling they must choose only one facet of their ancestry as their sole identity. Thus, golfer Tiger Woods calls himself a "Cablinasian" to describe his mixed Caucasian, black, American Indian, and Asian background. Race and ethnicity arise from multiple sources: your own definition of yourself; the way others see you; and the way society treats you, particularly legally. All three of these are subject to change over time. Still, President Barack Obama, whose

race

A classification system that is sometimes understood as arising from genetically significant differences among human populations, or from visible differences in human physiognomy, or as a social construction that varies across time and space.



FIGURE 5.3 Castas painting. These paintings were common in colonial Mexico. They depict the myriad racial and ethnic combinations perceived to arise from intermixing among Europeans, indigenous peoples, and African slaves in the New World. They provided a way for those in power to keep track of the confusing racial hierarchy they had created. (Schalkwijk/Art Resource, NY.)

mixed-race ancestry has led him to identify with both his black and his white relatives, struggled during the 2008 presidential campaign with the claims that he was at once “too black” and “not black enough” to be a viable presidential candidate.

In Brazil, by contrast, a range of physiognomic features, such as skin pigmentation, eye color, and hair texture, are used to identify a person racially, with the result that many racial categories exist in Brazil. Siblings are frequently classified in significantly different racial terms depending on their appearance. The same person can be put into multiple racial categories by different people, and individuals’ own racial self-designations can depend on such variables as their mood at the time they are asked. Increased economic or educational status can “whiten”

individuals formerly classified as black. However, one must keep in mind that Brazil was also the last country in the Americas to abolish slavery, and discrimination against darker-skinned Brazilians is common today.

Studies of genetic variation have demonstrated that there is far more variability within so-called racial groups than between them, which has led most scholars to believe that all human beings are, genetically speaking, members of only one race: *Homo sapiens sapiens*. In fact, some social scientists have dropped the term *race* altogether in favor of *ethnicity*. This is not to say, however, that racism, the belief that human capabilities are determined by racial classification and that some races are superior to others, does not exist. In this chapter, we use the verb *racialize* to refer to the processes whereby these socially constructed differences are understood—usually, but not always, by the powerful majority—to be impervious to assimilation. Across the world, hatreds based in racism are at the root of the most incendiary conflicts imaginable (see Subject to Debate, page 152).

What exactly is an ethnic group? The word *ethnic* is derived from the Greek word *ethnos*, meaning a “people” or “nation,” but that definition is too broad. For our purposes, an **ethnic group** consists of people of common ancestry and cultural tradition. A strong feeling of group identity characterizes ethnicity. Membership in an ethnic group is largely involuntary, in the sense that a person cannot simply decide to join; instead, he or she must be born

ethnic group

A group of people who share a common ancestry and cultural tradition, often living as a minority group in a larger society.



FIGURE 5.4 Mug shots of people from different races. Phenotype variations—visible bodily differences such as facial features, skin color, and hair texture—are considered indicative of “race” by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). “Race” is one of several visible characteristics—which also include tattoos, scars, height, and weight—and is often used by law enforcement to identify suspects. These are photos from the FBI’s 10 Most Wanted list. **How is this idea of race as defined by visible differences different from race as it is commonly understood in the United States? Do you see any similarities between this image and Figure 5.3?** (Courtesy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.)



Subject to Debate

Racism: An Embarrassment of the Past, or Here to Stay?

Most modern societies are quick to claim that they have moved beyond the scourge of racism. Brazil, for example, bills itself as a “racial democracy.” Swedes see theirs as a nation that is particularly tolerant in matters of race. And the “land of opportunity” privileges of the United States are supposedly extended to all, regardless of race, creed, color, and so forth.

Yet we know through our day-to-day experiences—studying, working, and socializing in specific places—that although “postracism” may be the ideal of modern societies, it is not always the fact in real life. In France in 2005, for instance, working-class Paris suburbs such as Clichy-sous-Bois—home to mostly Muslim immigrants from North Africa—became the site of rioting by youths who felt persecuted and excluded from French society because of their religion, culture, skin color, and immigrant status. A group of teenage boys who had been playing soccer were returning to the housing projects where they lived when they spotted the police. They scattered in order to avoid the detainment, questioning, and requests to show identity papers that such youths often face. Thinking that they were being chased in relation to a reported burglary at a construction site, three of the teenagers hid in a power substation; two of them were accidentally electrocuted. This incident tapped into a well of unrest over what many see as the systematic exclusion in France of those with Arabic- or African-sounding names and darker skins, exclusion that has led to high levels of unemployment among *banlieue* (the French equivalent of a ghetto) residents. Months of rioting ensued throughout France. Nearly 10,000 cars were set on fire, property damage totaled in the hundreds of millions of euros, and 3000 arrests were made.

The following year in the United States, widespread immigration protests filled city streets across the nation. In the spring of 2006, an estimated half a million people hit the streets of Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., and groups numbering in the tens of thousands marched in Denver, Milwaukee, Charlotte, Atlanta, Phoenix, and many other cities across the nation. Hispanics and their supporters took to the streets to protest legislation that threatened to deport undocumented workers and to classify anyone who helped an undocumented individual as a felon. As in the French incidents, Hispanic immigrants to the United States said they felt discriminated against and excluded from society. Even those who merely “look” or “sound” Hispanic are often the targets of racism. Rather than

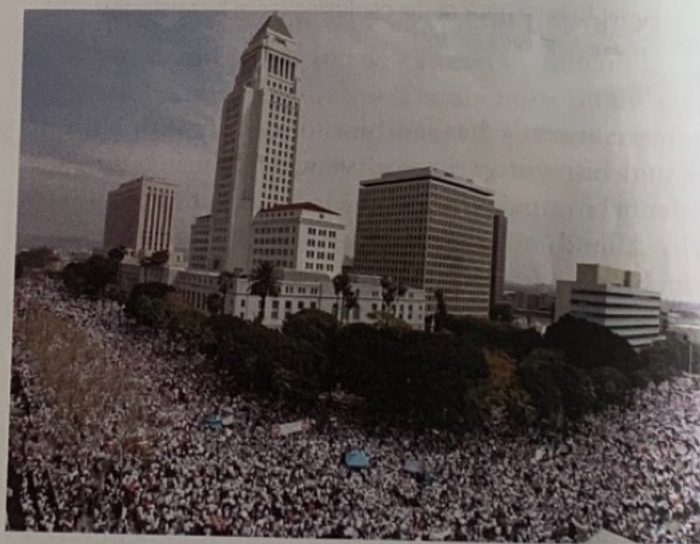
being violent terrorists or drains on society, protesters argued that Hispanics are, in fact, the backbone of low-wage labor in the United States. “When did you ever see a Mexican blow up the World Trade Center? Who do you think built the World Trade Center? I’m in my homeland!” exclaimed 22-year-old David González, whose mother immigrated to the United States from Mexico (quoted in the Associated Press).

These incidents highlight the fact that race-related tensions are not only about ancestry or skin pigmentation but also about religious differences, immigration, and social opportunities. As anxieties arise over ever-higher levels of contact in a globalizing world, racialized intolerance is all too often the response. Indeed, A. Sivanandan has argued that “poverty is the new black” in a globalizing world that has become increasingly hostile toward involuntary migrants regardless of their skin color.

Continuing the Debate

Possible responses to racism lie along a continuum, from violent protest to waiting for time to erase racism. Consider these questions:

- Is racism really a serious problem, or are minority groups simply agitating as they always have?
- Will racism finally go away by itself as societies modernize and move beyond intolerance?
- Can legislation adequately and appropriately address the fundamental causes of racism, or are more radical measures—protests or work stoppages, for example—necessary given the deeply rooted nature of race-based discrimination?



Protesters numbering around half a million rally for immigrant rights in Los Angeles, part of a wave of protests occurring throughout U.S. cities in the spring of 2006. (J. Emilio Flores/Getty Images.)

into the group. In some cases, outsiders can join an ethnic group by marriage or adoption.

Reflecting on Geography

Are ethnic groups always minorities, or do majority groups also have an ethnicity? What different sorts of traits might a majority group use to define its identity, as compared to a minority group? Is it possible for a racialized minority group to racialize other groups, or even itself?

Different ethnic groups may base their identities on different traits. For some, such as Jews, ethnicity primarily means religion; for the Amish, it is both folk culture and religion; for Swiss-Americans, it is national origin; for German-Americans, it is ancestral language; for African-Americans, it is a shared history stemming from slavery. Religion, language, folk culture, history, and place of origin can all help provide the basis of the sense of "we-ness" that underlies ethnicity.

As with race, ethnicity is a notion that is at once vexingly vague yet hugely powerful (see Patricia's Notebook, page 154). The boundaries of ethnicity are often fuzzy and shift over time. Moreover, ethnicity often serves to mark minority groups as different, yet majority groups also have an ethnicity, which may be based on a common heritage, language, religion, or culture. Indeed, an important aspect

of being a member of the majority is the ability to decide how, when, and even if one's ethnicity forms an overt aspect of one's identity. Finally, some scholars question whether ethnicity even exists as intrinsic qualities of a group, suggesting instead that the perception of ethnic difference arises only through contact and interaction.

Apropos of this last point is the distinction between immigrant and indigenous (sometimes called *aboriginal*) groups. Many, if not most, ethnic groups around the world originated when they migrated from their native lands and settled in a new country. In their old home, they often belonged to the host culture and were not ethnic, but when they were transplanted by relocation diffusion to a foreign land, they simultaneously became a minority and ethnic. Han Chinese are not ethnic in China (Figure 5.5), but if they come to North America they are. Indigenous ethnic groups that continue to live in their ancient homes become ethnic when they are absorbed into larger political states. The Navajo, for example, reside on their traditional and ancient lands and became ethnic only when the United States annexed their territory. The same is true of Mexicans, who, long resident in what is today the southwestern United States, found themselves labeled ethnic minorities when the border was moved after the 1848 U.S.-Mexican War. "We did not jump the border, the border jumped us!" is a common local comeback to this sudden shift in ethnic status.

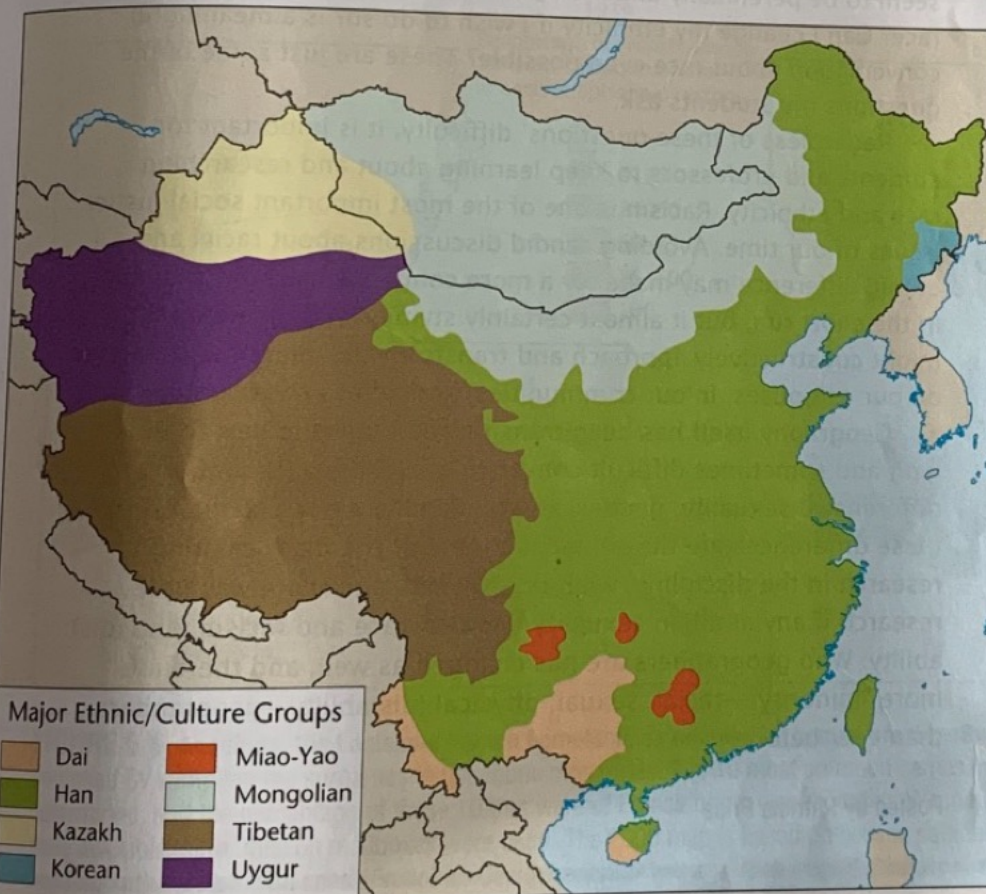


FIGURE 5.5 Ethnic minorities in China.

Han Chinese are the dominant ethnic group, comprising about 92% of China's population. In fact, one out of five of the Earth's inhabitants are Han Chinese, making this the world's largest ethnic group. **Why are China's ethnic minority populations concentrated in sparsely populated peripheries of the country?** (Source: Adapted from Chiao-min Hsieh and Jean Kan Hsieh, 1995.)

Patricia's Notebook

Teaching Race and Ethnicity



Patricia Price



Anti-immigrant rally in Washington, D.C. This protest was organized by the Minutemen Project. Named after the American Revolutionary militiamen, this activist group attempts to police the border between the United States and Mexico. They and their supporters view this border as a source of drugs, crime, and undocumented immigration into the United States. **Critics claim that Mexicans and Mexican-Americans are stigmatized, discriminated against, and persecuted by groups like this. What do you think?** (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images.)

In my own research, I explore the changing geographies of race in the United States. In particular, I examine new immigration flows and cultural debates about immigration, race, and Latinos that have arisen in response. There is no question that Latino immigrants, particularly those who are poorest and brownest, are treated as a racial group in this country. True, the U.S. Census recognizes that "Latino" or "Hispanic" is an ethnicity and that those who identify as Latino or Hispanic can be of any (or mixed) race. But in practice most Americans, in their day-to-day engagement with race, view Latinos as one "point" in what David Hollinger has termed the ethno-racial pentagon: black, white, red, yellow, and brown.

We academics tend to teach what we research, and so I teach a great deal on race and ethnicity. Despite my affection for the topic, however, I'm the first to admit that it's hard to think of a subject that is more controversial or more difficult to teach. Students are often angry or confused about race, based on their own, often bitter, experiences. Race and ethnicity are hard to define, and their borders seem to be perennially under siege. Are Hispanics a separate race? Can I change my ethnicity if I wish to do so? Is a meaningful conversation about race even possible? These are just some of the questions my students ask.

Regardless of these questions' difficulty, it is important for students and professors to keep learning about and researching race and ethnicity. Racism is one of the most important social justice issues of our time. Avoiding candid discussions about racial and ethnic difference may make for a more congenial classroom climate in the short run, but it almost certainly stymies engagement that might constructively approach and transform the injustices of racism on our campuses, in our communities, and across the country.

Geography itself has been transformed thanks in part to our long and sometimes difficult conversations about race and other differences: sexuality, gender, and (dis)ability among them. Today these differences are the subject of some of the most exciting research in the discipline, whereas 20 years ago there was little research if any at all on sexuality, gender, race and racism, and (dis)ability. Who geographers are has changed as well, and there are more "minority"—racial, sexual, physical (dis)ability—geographers than ever before.

Posted by Patricia Price

This is not to say that ethnic minorities remain unchanged by their host culture. **Acculturation** often occurs,

acculturation

The adoption by an ethnic group of enough of the ways of the host society to be able to function economically and socially.

assimilation

The complete blending of an ethnic group into the host society, resulting in the loss of all distinctive ethnic traits.

meaning that the ethnic group adopts enough of the ways of the host society to be able to function economically and socially. Stronger still is **assimilation**, which implies a complete blending with the host culture and may involve the loss of many distinctive ethnic traits. Inter-marriage is perhaps the most effective way of encouraging assimilation. Many students of American culture long assumed that all ethnic groups would eventually be assimilated into the American melting pot, but relatively few have been; instead they use acculturation as their way of survival. The past three decades, in fact, have witnessed a resurgence of ethnic identity across the globe (see Subject to Debate, page 152).

Ethnic geography is the study of the spatial aspects of ethnicity. Ethnic groups are the keepers of distinctive cultural traditions and the focal points of various kinds of social interaction. They are the basis not only of group identity but also of friendships, marriage partners, recreational outlets, business success, and political power bases. These interactions can offer cultural security and reinforcement of tradi-

tion. Ethnic groups often practice unique adaptive strategies and usually occupy clearly defined areas, whether rural or urban. In other words, the study of ethnicity has built-in geographical dimensions. The geography of race is a related field of study that focuses on the spatial aspects of how race is socially constructed and negotiated. Cultural geographers who study race and ethnicity tend to always have an eye on the larger economic, political, environmental, and social power relations at work when race is involved. This chapter draws on insights and examples from both ethnic geography and the geography of race.



Region

How are ethnic groups distributed geographically? Do ethnic culture regions have a special spatial character? Formal ethnic culture regions exist in most

countries (see Figure 5.5, page 153). To map these regions, geographers rely on data as diverse as probable origin of surnames in telephone directories and census totals for answers to questions on ancestry, primary racial identification, or language spoken at home. Given the cultural complexity of the real world, each method produces a slightly different map (Figure 5.6). Regardless of the mapping method,

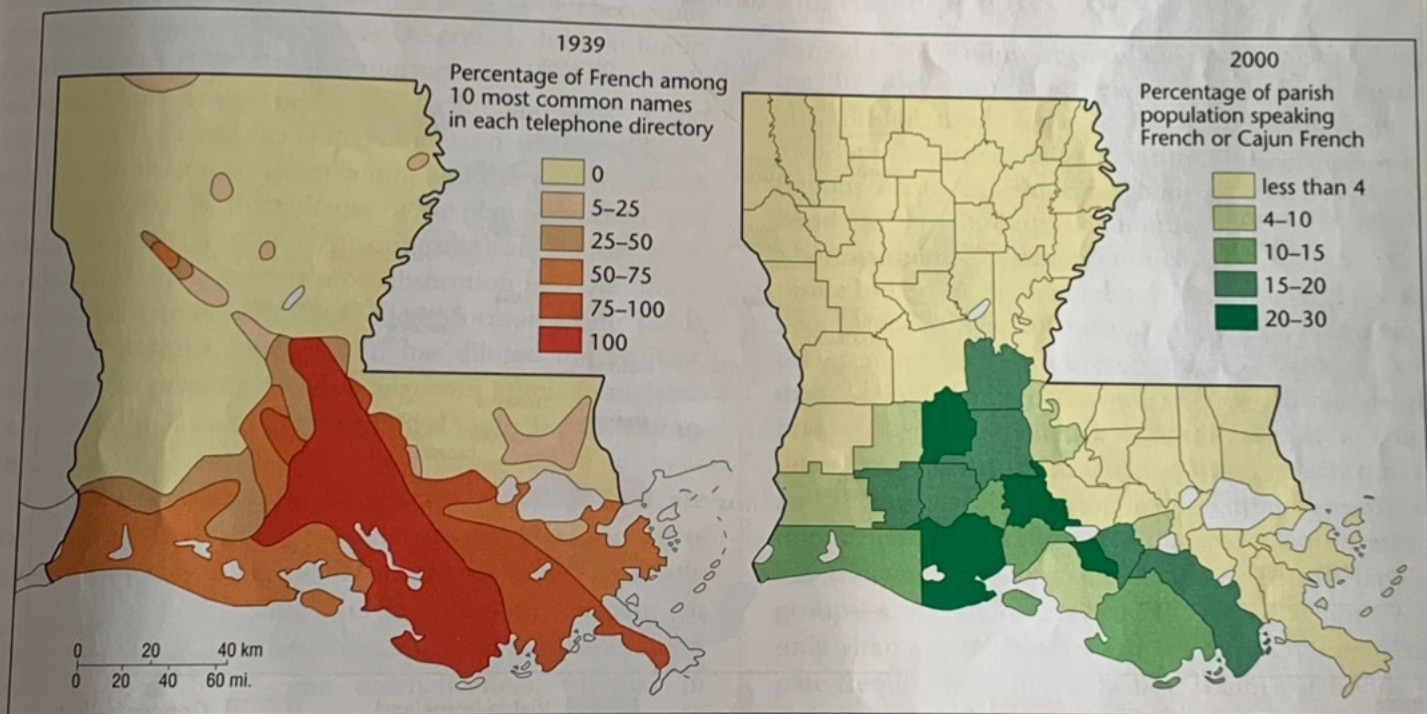


FIGURE 5.6 Acadiana, the Louisiana French homeland, as mapped by two different methods. The 1939 map was compiled by sampling the surnames in telephone directories. The 10 most common names in each directory were determined, and the percentage of these 10 that were of French origin was recorded. When no telephone directories were available, surnames on mailboxes were used. The 2000 map is based on census data for the percentage of those residing in the parish who speak French or Cajun French. (After Meigs, 1941: 245; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.)

ethnic culture regions reveal a vivid mosaic of minorities in most countries of the world.

Ethnic Homelands and Islands

There are four types of ethnic culture regions: the rural ethnic homelands and islands, and urban ethnic neighbor-

hoods and ghettos. The difference between ethnic homelands and islands is their size, in terms of both area and population. Rural **ethnic homelands** cover large areas, often have overlapping municipal borders, and

ethnic homelands
Sizable areas inhabited by an ethnic minority that exhibits a strong sense of attachment to the region and often exercises some measure of political and social control over it.



FIGURE 5.7 Selected ethnic homelands in North America, past and present, and concentrations of rural ethnic islands. The Hispano homeland is also referred to as the Spanish-American homeland. With the return migration of African-Americans from northern industrial cities such as Chicago to rural southern areas, the long-moribund Black Belt homeland appears to be undergoing a revitalization. (Sources: Arreola, 2002; Carlson, 1990; Meinig, 1965; Nostrand and Estaville, 2001; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.)

have sizable populations. Because of their size, the age of their inhabitants, and their geographical segregation, they tend to reinforce ethnicity. The residents of homelands typically seek or enjoy some measure of political autonomy or self-rule. Homeland populations usually exhibit a strong sense of attachment to the region. Most homelands belong to indigenous ethnic groups and include special, venerated places that serve to symbolize and celebrate the region—shrines to the special identity of the ethnic group. In its fully developed form, the homeland represents that most powerful of geographical entities, one combining the attributes of

ethnic islands

Small ethnic areas in the rural countryside; sometimes called folk islands.

both formal and functional culture regions. By contrast, **ethnic islands** are small dots in the countryside, usually occupying an area smaller than a county and serving as home to several hundred to several thousand people (at most). Because of their small size and isolation, they do not exert as powerful an influence as homelands do.

North America includes a number of viable ethnic homelands (Figure 5.7), including Acadiana, the Louisiana French homeland now increasingly identified with the Cajun people and also recognized as a vernacular region; the Hispano or Spanish-American homeland of highland New Mexico and Colorado; the Tejano homeland of south Texas; the Navajo reservation homeland in Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico; and the French-Canadian homeland centered on the valley of the lower St. Lawrence River in Québec. Some geographers would also include Deseret, a Mormon homeland in the Great Basin of the intermontane West. Some ethnic homelands have experienced decline and decay. These include the Pennsylvania Dutch homeland, weakened to the point of extinction by assimilation, and the southern Black Belt, diminished by the collapse of the plantation-sharecrop system and the resulting African-American relocation to northern urban areas. Mormon absorption into the American cultural mainstream has eroded Mormon ethnic status, whereas nonethnic immigration has diluted the Hispano homeland. At present, the most vigorous ethnic homelands are those of the French-Canadians and south Texas Mexican-Americans.

If residents of ethnic homelands assimilate and are absorbed into the host culture, then, at the very least, a geographical residue, or **ethnic substrate**, remains. The result-

ethnic substrate

Regional cultural distinctiveness that remains following the assimilation of an ethnic homeland.

ing culture region, though no longer ethnic, nevertheless retains some distinctiveness, whether in local cuisine, dialect, or traditions. Thus, it differs from surrounding

regions in a variety of ways. In seeking to explain its distinctiveness, geographers often discover an ancient, vanished ethnicity. For example, the Italian province of Tuscany

owes both its name and some of its uniqueness to the Etruscan people, who ceased to be an ethnic group 2000 years ago, when they were absorbed into the Latin-speaking Roman Empire. More recently, the massive German presence in the American heartland (Figure 5.8, page 158), now largely nonethnic, helped shape the cultural character of the Midwest, which can be said to have a German ethnic substrate.

Ethnic islands are much more numerous than homelands or substrates, peppering large areas of rural North America, as Figures 5.7 and 5.8 suggest. Ethnic islands develop because, in the words of geographer Alice Rechlin, “a minority group will tend to utilize space in such a way as to minimize the interaction distance between group members,” facilitating contacts within the ethnic community and minimizing exposure to the outside world. People are drawn to rural places where others of the same ethnic background are found. Ethnic islands survive from one generation to the next because most land is inherited. Moreover, land is typically sold within the ethnic group, which helps to preserve the identity of the island. Social stigma is often attached to those who sell land to outsiders. Even so, the smaller size of ethnic islands makes their populations more susceptible to acculturation and assimilation.

Ethnic Neighborhoods and Racialized Ghettos

Formal ethnic culture regions also occur in cities throughout the world, as minority populations initially create, or are consigned to, separate ethnic residential quarters.

Two types of urban ethnic culture regions exist. An **ethnic neighborhood** is a voluntary community where people of common ethnicity

ethnic neighborhood

A voluntary community where people of like origin reside by choice.

reside by choice. Such neighborhoods are, in the words of Peter Matwijiw, an Australian geographer, “the results of preferences shown by different ethnic groups . . . toward maintaining group cohesiveness.” An ethnic neighborhood has many benefits: common use of a language other than that of the majority culture, nearby kin, stores and services specially tailored to a certain group’s tastes, the presence of employment that relies on an ethnically based division of labor, and institutions important to the group—such as churches and lodges—that remain viable only when a number of people live close enough to participate frequently in their activities. Miami’s orthodox Jewish population clusters in Miami Beach—area neighborhoods in part because the proximity of synagogues and kosher food establishments makes religious observance far easier than it would be in a neighborhood that did not have a sizable orthodox Jewish population.

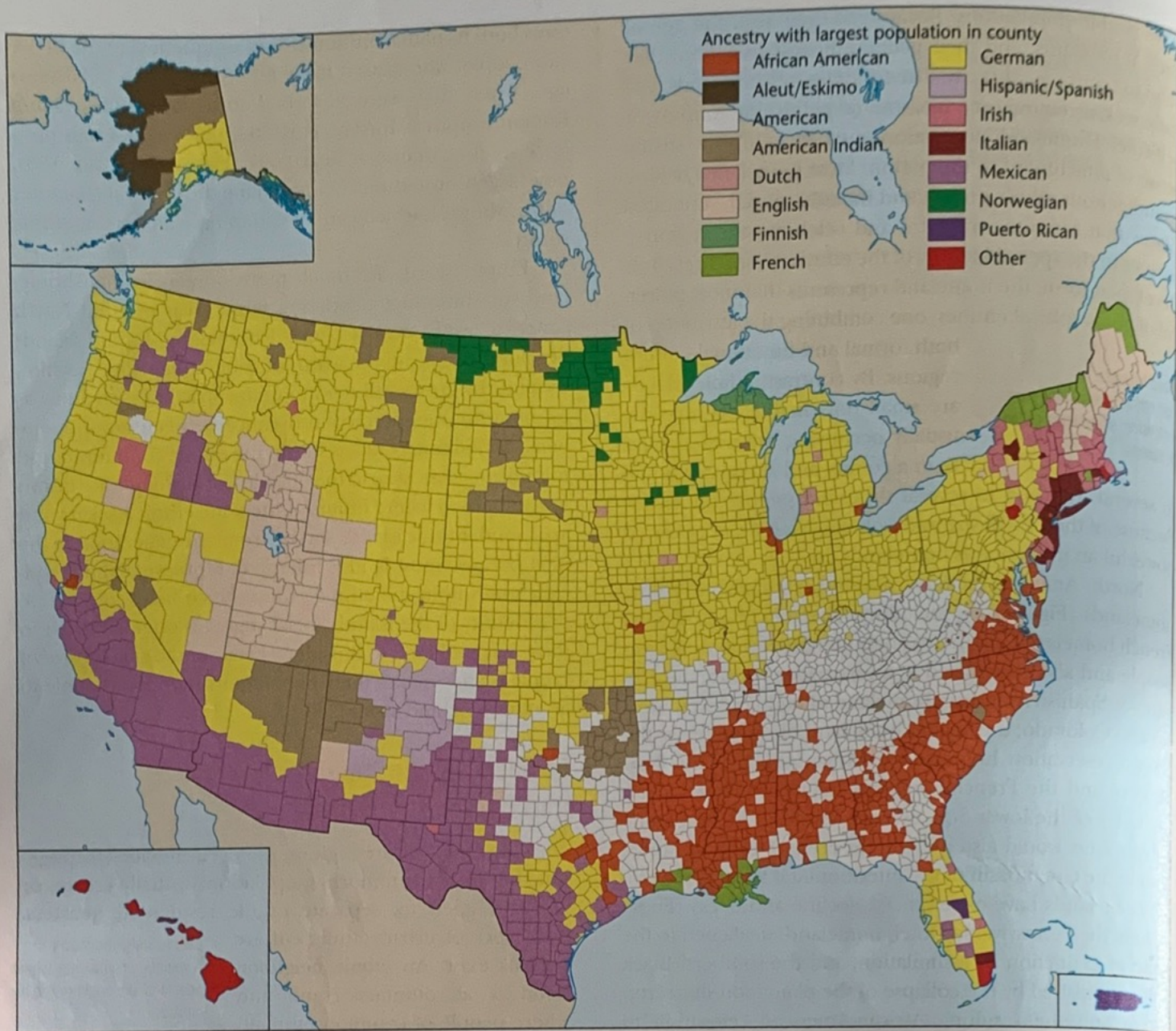


FIGURE 5.8 Ethnic and national-origin groups in the United States. Notice how the border between Canada and the United States generally also forms a cultural boundary. Several ethnic homelands appear on this map, as do many ethnic islands. (Sources: Wikipedia/U.S. Census Bureau.)

ghetto

Traditionally, an area within a city where an ethnic group lives, either by choice or by force. Today in the United States, the term typically indicates an impoverished African-American urban neighborhood.

The second type of urban ethnic region is a **ghetto**. Historically, the term dates from thirteenth-century medieval Europe, when Jews lived in segregated, walled communities called ghettos (Figure 5.9). Ethnic residential quarters have, in fact, long been a

part of urban cultural geography. In ancient times, conquerors often forced the vanquished native population to live in ghettos. Religious minorities usually received similar treatment. Islamic cities, for example, had Christian dis-

tricts. If one abides by the origin of the term, ghettos need to be neither composed of racialized minorities nor impoverished. Typically, however, the term *ghetto* is commonly used in the United States today to signal an impoverished, urban, African-American neighborhood. A related term, *barrio*, refers to an impoverished, urban, Hispanic neighborhood. Ghettos and barrios are as much functional culture regions as formal ones.

Coinciding with the urbanization and industrialization of North America, ethnic neighborhoods became typical in the northern United States and in Canada about 1840.

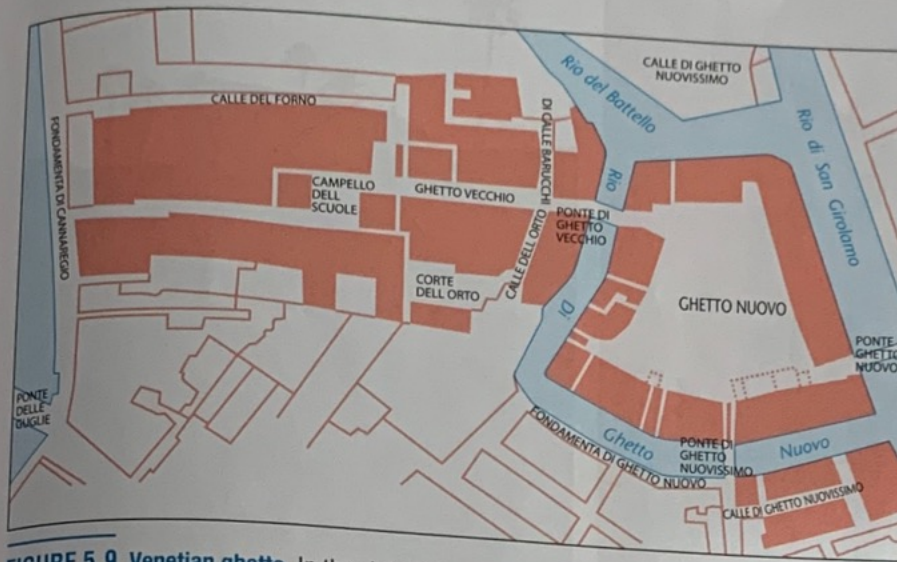


FIGURE 5.9 Venetian ghetto. In the sixteenth century, Venice's Jewish population lived in a segregated, walled neighborhood called a ghetto. On the left is a map of this early ghetto. Though most of Venice's Jews do not reside in the ghetto today (right), many attend religious services there, and the ghetto continues to be at the heart of Venetian Jewish life. (Left: Adapted from the Jewish Museum of Venice; Right: Lusoltaly/Alamy.)



Instead of dispersing throughout the residential areas of the city, immigrant groups clustered together. To some degree, ethnic groups that migrated to cities came from different parts of Europe from those who settled in rural areas. Whereas Germany and Scandinavia supplied most of the rural settlers, the cities attracted those from Ireland and eastern and southern Europe. Catholic Irish, Italians, and Poles, along with Jews from eastern Europe, became the main urban ethnic groups, although lesser numbers of virtually every nationality in Europe also came to the cities of North America. These groups were later joined by French-Canadians, southern blacks, Puerto Ricans, Appalachian whites, Native Americans, Asians, and other non-European groups.

Regardless of their particular history, the neighborhoods created by ethnic migrants tend to be transitory. As a rule, urban ethnic groups remain in neighborhoods while undergoing acculturation. As a result, their central-city ethnic neighborhoods experience a life cycle in which one group is replaced by another, later-arriving one. We can see this process in action in the succession of groups that resided in certain neighborhoods and then moved on to more desirable areas. The list of groups that passed through one Chicago neighborhood from the nineteenth century to the present provides an almost complete history of American migra-

tory patterns. First came the Germans and Irish, who were succeeded by the Greeks, Poles, French-Canadians, Czechs, and Russian Jews, who were soon replaced by the Italians. The Italians, in turn, were replaced by Chicanos and a small group of Puerto Ricans. As this succession occurred, the established groups had often attained enough economic and cultural capital to move to new areas of the city. In many cities, established ethnic groups moved to the suburbs. Even when ethnic groups relocated from inner-city neighborhoods to the suburbs, residential clustering survived (Figure 5.10, page 160). The San Gabriel Valley, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) from downtown Los Angeles, has developed as a major Chinese suburb. These suburban ethnic neighborhoods, called **ethnoburbs**, can house relatively affluent immigrant populations. Ethnic neighborhoods will receive additional attention in Chapter 11.

ethnoburbs
A suburban ethnic neighborhood, sometimes home to relatively affluent immigration populations.

Recent Shifts in Ethnic Mosaics

In the United States, immigration laws have changed during the past 40 years, shifting in 1965 from the quota system based on national origins to one that allowed a certain number of immigrants from the Eastern and Western hemispheres, as well as giving preference to certain

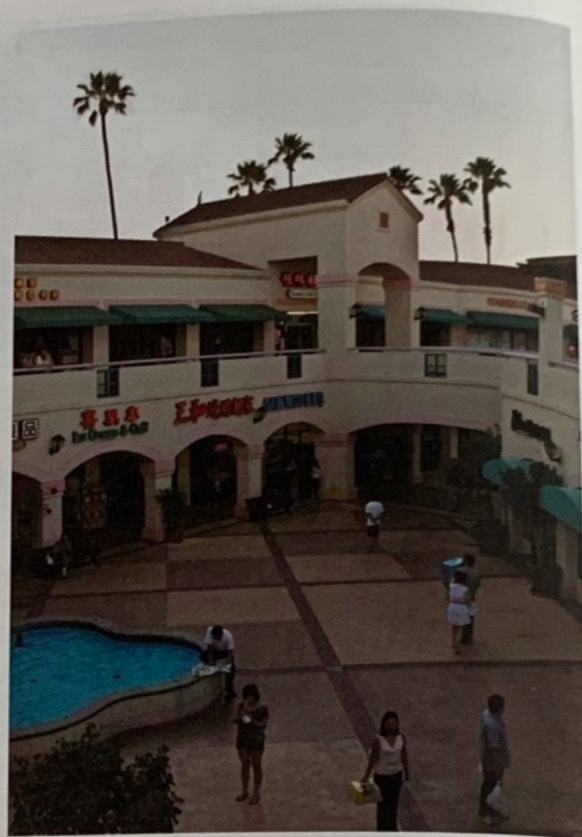
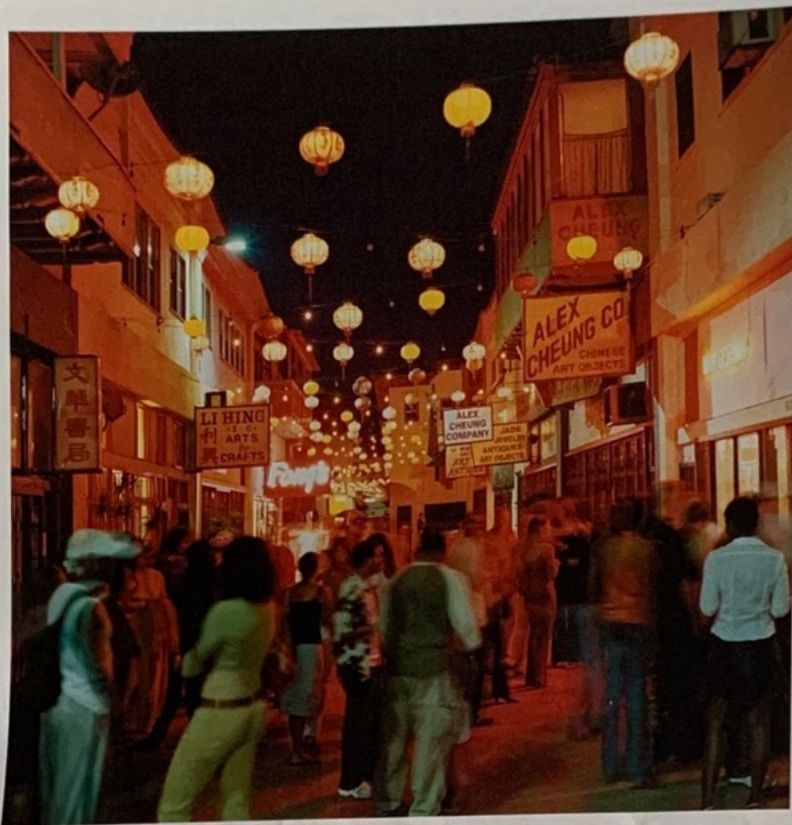


FIGURE 5.10 Two Chinese ethnic neighborhoods. The image on the left depicts Los Angeles's traditional urban Chinatown, which is a popular tourist destination as well. The image on the right illustrates the suburban location and flavor of new ethnoburbs. This image is from the San Gabriel Valley, outside Los Angeles.

(Left: Susan Seubert/drr.net; Right: Ron Lim.)

categories of migrants, such as family members of those already residing in the United States. These changes, and the rising levels of undocumented immigration, have led to a growing ethnic variety in North American cities.

Asia and Latin America, rather than Europe, is now the principal source of immigrants to North America. In 2010, Mexico alone supplied 23.7 percent of immigrants to the United States; China, the Philippines, India, and Vietnam were next, with a combined total of 15.9 percent. Asian and Pacific Islanders are now the fastest-growing group in the United States, projected to grow from only 4 percent of the U.S. population today to 10 percent by 2050. People of Japanese ancestry form the largest national-origin group in Hawaii, and Washington State elected the first Chinese-American governor in the country's history in 1996. Many West Coast cities, from Vancouver to San Diego, have acquired very sizable Asian populations. Vancouver, already 11 percent Asian in 1981, has since absorbed many more Asian immigrants, particularly from Hong Kong, which again became part of China in 1997. The 2006 Canadian census shows Chinese are by

far the largest non-European ethnic group in Vancouver, accounting for 29.4 percent of that city's visible minority population. In the United States, the West Coast is home to about 40 percent of the Asian population, mostly in California, whereas the urban corridor that stretches from New York City to Boston houses another concentration (Figure 5.11). Spatially speaking, Asians are less segregated than African-American or Hispanic populations.

Latin America, including the Caribbean countries, has also surpassed Europe as a source of immigrants to North America (Figure 5.12, page 162). The two largest national origin groups of Hispanic immigrants—Mexicans and Cubans—are still the most prevalent, but they have been supplemented since the 1980s by waves of Central American and, increasingly, South American arrivals. East Coast cities have absorbed large numbers of immigrants from the West Indies. The two largest national-origin groups coming to New York City as early as the 1970s were from the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, displacing Italy as the leading source of immigrants. For the United States as a whole, in 2002 Latinos narrowly surpassed African-Americans as the largest

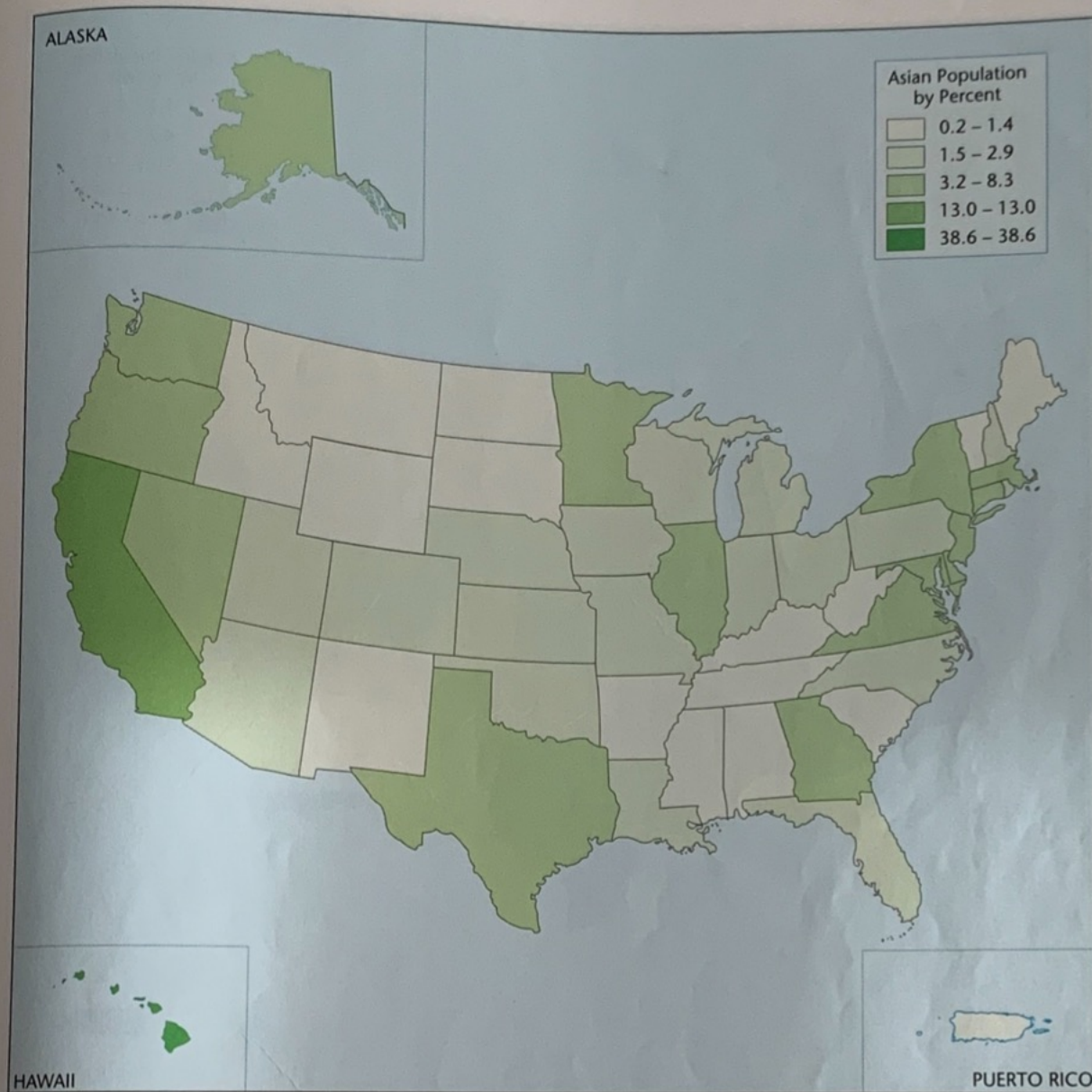


FIGURE 5.11 Asian population by state. People indicating “Asian” alone as a percentage of the total population by state. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.)

ethnic group, after non-Hispanic whites. In some cities that are popular destinations for Hispanic immigrants, Hispanics constitute majority populations (**Table 5.1**, page 162). The Latino influx into the United States has reweaved significant portions of the cultural mosaic, influencing food preferences, music, fashion, and language.

As demographer William Frey has noted, ethnic populations continue to concentrate in established ports of entry, most of them in coastal locations. There is a large swath of the United States that has remained largely non-Hispanic white (**Figure 5.13**, page 163). **Figure 5.14**

(page 164) shows that black Americans, too, remain spatially concentrated. The 2010 census reported that 79% of whites live in white-majority neighborhoods, while 44% of African-Americans live in black-majority neighborhoods and 45% of Hispanics reside in Hispanic-majority neighborhoods. As a nation, we may be becoming more diverse—a more colorful mosaic—but we are nowhere near the melting pot we sometimes portray ourselves to be.

Although the United States may boast of its immigrant background, only one U.S. city—Miami—ranked in the top 10 list of the world’s cities that have significant proportions

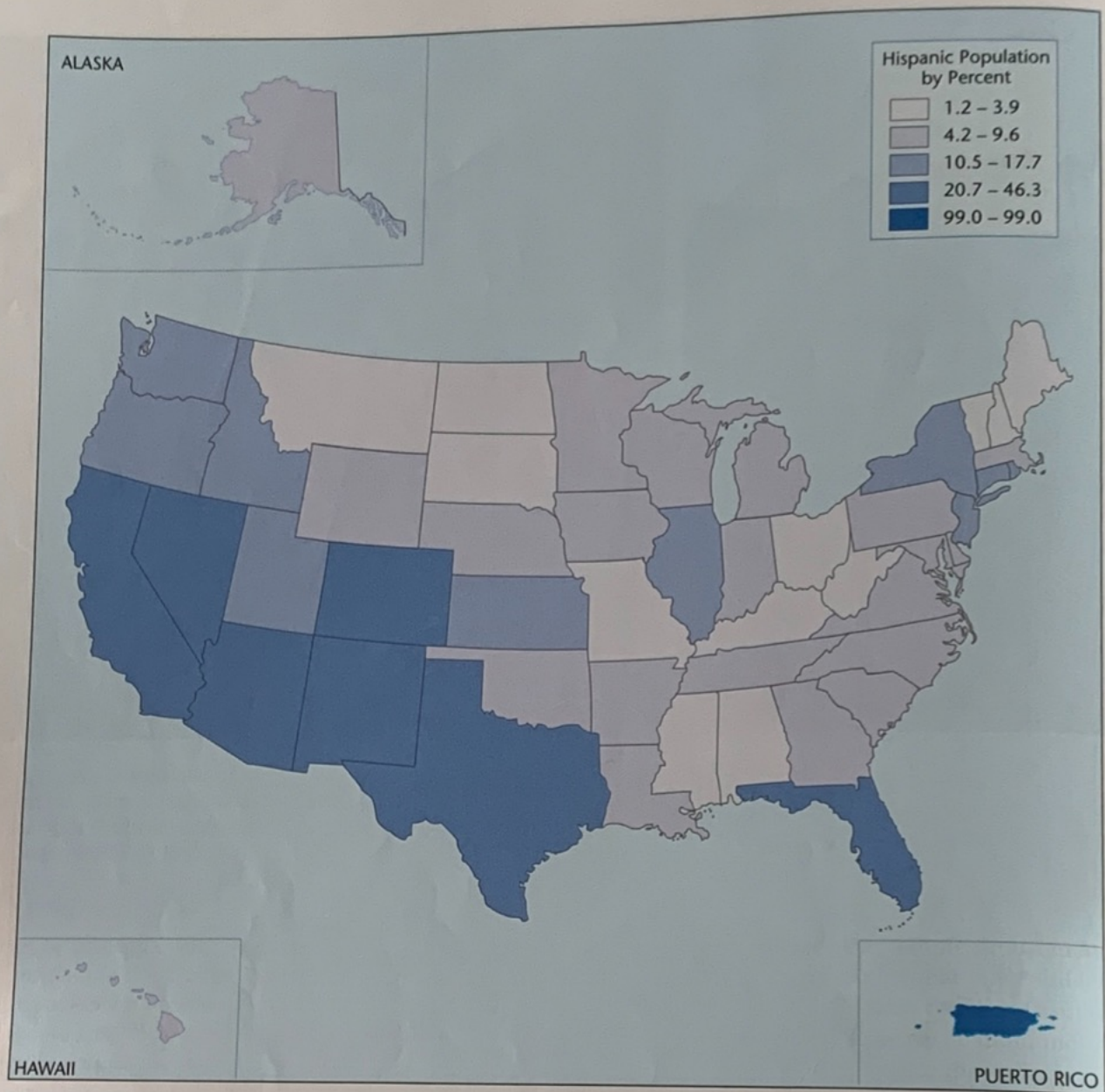


FIGURE 5.12 Hispanic population by state. Hispanic or Latino population as a percentage of the total population by state. "Hispanic" is an ethnic category and can encompass several racial designations. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.)

TABLE 5.1 U.S. Cities of 100,000 or More with the Highest Ethnic Concentrations

	Largest Concentration	Second-Largest Concentration	Third-Largest Concentration
Black	Gary, Indiana (84%)	Detroit, Michigan (81.6%)	Birmingham, Alabama (73.5%)
White	Livonia, Michigan (95.5%)	Cape Coral, Florida (93%)	Boise, Idaho (92.2%)
Hispanic	East Los Angeles, California (96.8%)	Laredo, Texas (94.1%)	Brownsville, Texas (91.3%)
Asian	Honolulu, Hawaii (55.9%)	Daly City, California (50.7%)	Fremont, California (37%)

The figures for black, white, and Asian are for that category alone, not in combination with other races. The figures for Hispanic can include any racial designation. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.)

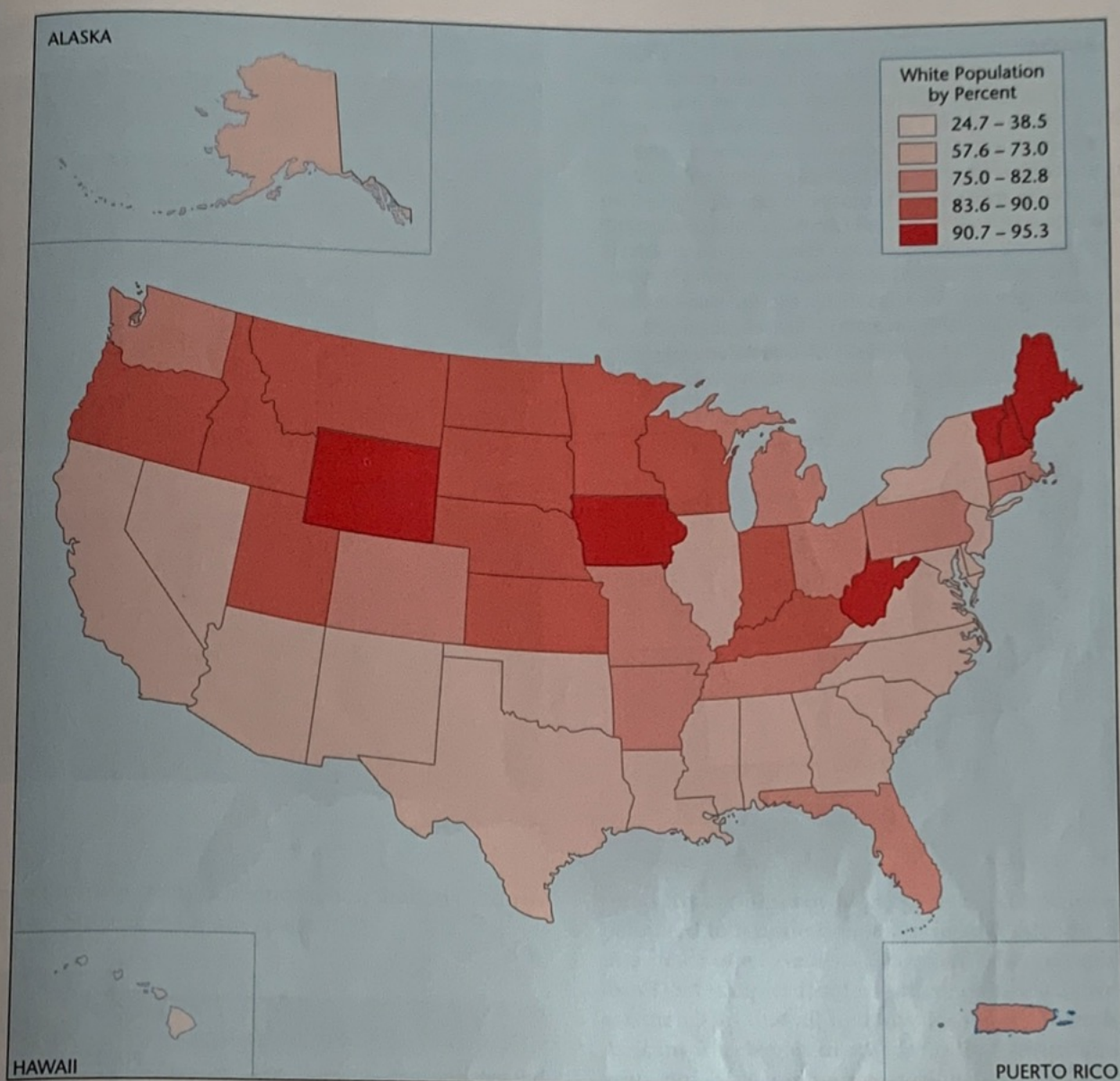


FIGURE 5.13 White population by state. People indicating “white” alone as a percentage of the total population by state.
(Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.)

of foreign-born residents (Table 5.2, page 164). Three of the top 10 cities are located in the Middle East, three in Europe, two in Canada, and one in the Pacific. In addition, national-origin populations prevalent in the United States are even more prevalent in other countries. Twenty-eight million ethnic Chinese reside outside China and Taiwan. Most of these overseas Chinese live not in North America but in Southeast Asian countries and even Polynesia (Figure 5.15, page 165). Indonesia has more than 7 million, Thailand nearly 6 million, and Malaysia more than 5 million. Pacific Islanders exhibit a similar pattern. Auckland,

New Zealand, has the largest Polynesian population of any city in the world and ranks number seven in the world by percentage of foreign-born (see Table 5.2). Australia, Argentina, and Brazil also have large ethnic populations. Parts of East Africa have long been home to relatively affluent South Asian Indian populations, whereas Lebanese populations in West Africa enjoy a similarly privileged position. Even European countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain—long known as sources rather than destinations of migrants—today are home to millions of Africans, Turks, and Asians. Immigration-based

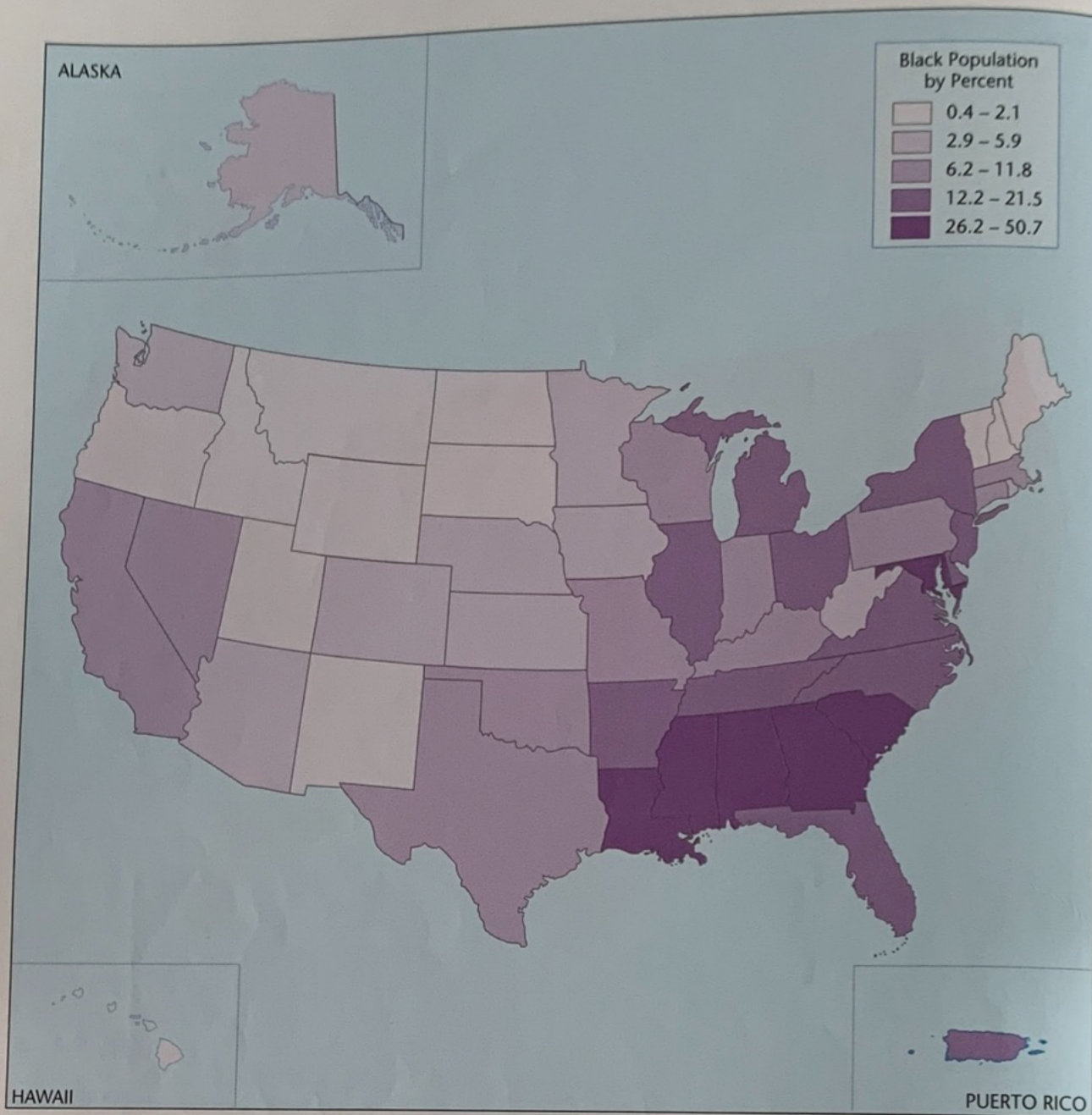


FIGURE 5.14 Black population by state. People indicating “black or African-American” alone as a percentage of the total population by state. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2010.)

TABLE 5.2 Top 10 Cities by Percentage of Foreign-Born

Percentage		Percentage	
Dubai, United Arab Emirates	82	Vancouver, Canada	39
Miami, Florida	51	Auckland, New Zealand	39
Amsterdam, the Netherlands	47	Geneva, Switzerland	38
Toronto, Canada	45	Mecca, Saudi Arabia	38
Muscat, Oman	45	The Hague, the Netherlands	37

(Source: Adapted from Benton-Short, Price, and Friedman, 2005, p. 953.)



FIGURE 5.15 Store owned by a prosperous ethnic Chinese retailer on the island of Bora Bora in French Polynesia. The population of the island is overwhelmingly Polynesian. Only 0.8 percent of the people are Europeans, 6.6 percent are “Demis” (a mixture of white and Polynesian), and less than 0.5 percent are Asian. Yet this store and many others in the archipelagoes of the Pacific are owned by persons of Chinese heritage. Why don’t Polynesians own such stores? Because (1) they have no tradition of retailing and (2) theirs is a communal society that shares wealth. If a Polynesian were to open a store, all of his or her relatives would have the right to come and take merchandise for free, sharing the wealth. The store would fail within a month. And so the way was left open for the Chinese, who have a very different culture. (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

ethnicity is far from being a phenomenon limited to North America (see Subject to Debate, page 152).



Mobility

How do the various reasons behind mobility help to shape the complicated geographical patterns of ethnicity and race? When groups move, how do cultural patterns reassemble in new places?

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, it is often through migration that a group formerly in the majority becomes, in a new land, different from the mainstream and thus labeled as ethnic or racialized. The many motives for mobility can have different results in terms of where a group chooses to go, which parts of its original culture relocate and which do not, and who may become its neighbors in its new home.

Migration and Ethnicity

Much of the ethnic pattern in many parts of the world is the result of relocation diffusion. The migration process itself

often creates ethnicity, as people leave countries where they belonged to a nonethnic majority and become a minority in a new home. *National Geographic’s* Genographic Project uses DNA samples from volunteers worldwide to substantiate the claim that all humans descended from a group of Africans who began to migrate out of Africa about 60,000 years ago. The contemporary global mosaic of ethnic populations can be traced to their specific journeys. Today’s voluntary migrations have also produced much of the ethnic diversity in the United States and Canada, and the involuntary migration of political and economic refugees has always been an important factor in ethnicity worldwide and is becoming ever more so in North America.

Chain migration may be involved in relocation diffusion. In chain migration, an individual or small group decides to migrate to a foreign country. This decision typically arises from negative conditions in the home area, such as political persecution or lack of employment, and the perception of better conditions in the receiving country. Often ties between the sending and receiving areas are preexisting, such as those formed when military bases of

chain migration

The tendency of people to migrate along channels, over a period of time, from specific source areas to specific destinations.

receiving countries are established in sending countries. The first emigrants, or “innovators,” may be natural leaders who influence others, particularly friends and relatives, to accompany them in the migration. The word spreads to nearby communities, and soon a sizable migration is under way from a fairly small district in the source country to a comparably small area or neighborhood in the destination country (**Figure 5.16**). In village after village, the first emigrants often rank high in the local social order, so that hierarchical diffusion also occurs. That is, the *decision* to migrate spreads by a mixture of hierarchical and contagious diffusion, whereas the actual migration itself represents relocation diffusion.

involuntary migration

Also called forced migration, refers to the forced displacement of a population, whether by government policy (such as a resettlement program), warfare or other violence, ethnic cleansing, disease, natural disaster, or enslavement.

Involuntary migration also contributes to ethnic diffusion and the formation of ethnic culture regions. African slavery constituted the most demographically significant involuntary migration in human history and has strongly shaped the ethnic mosaic of the Americas. Refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam cre-

ated ethnic groups in North America, as did Guatemalans and Salvadorans fleeing political repression in Central America. Often, such forced migrations may result from policies of ethnic cleansing, whereby countries expel or massacre minorities outright to produce cultural homo-

geneity in their populations. In Europe, the newly independent country of Croatia has systematically expelled its Serb minority in a campaign of **ethnic cleansing**. Following forced migration, the relocated group often engages in voluntary migration to concentrate in some new locality. Cuban political refugees, scattered widely throughout the United States in the 1960s, reconvened in south Florida, and Vietnamese refugees continue to gather in Southern California, Louisiana, and Texas.

Outright warfare, too, displaces populations. During World War II, Polish populations were deported from the lands annexed into the German Reich, in an attempt to “Germanize” this region. In all, some 2 million Poles were expelled from their homes. In Iraq, more than 3 million people have been displaced by war-related violence there. **Figure 5.17** shows that about half of them remain in the country, whereas the rest have migrated across Iraq’s borders, with most fleeing to neighboring nations.

Return migration represents another type of ethnic diffusion and involves the voluntary movement of a group back to its ancestral homeland or native country. The large-scale return since 1975 of African-Americans from the cities of the northern and

ethnic cleansing

The removal of unwanted ethnic minority populations from a nation-state through mass killing, deportation, or imprisonment.

return migration

A type of ethnic diffusion that involves the voluntary movement of a group of migrants back to their ancestral or native country or homeland.

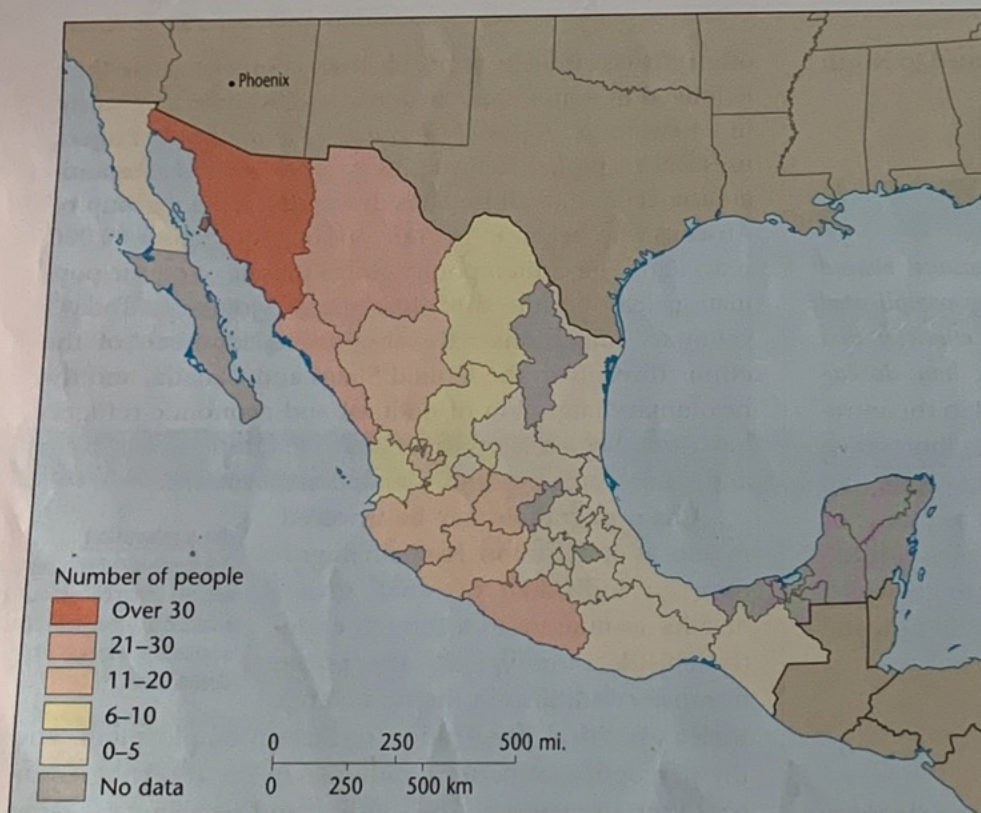


FIGURE 5.16 Origins of migrants. This map depicts the Mexican state of origin for the residents of Garfield, an ethnic neighborhood in Phoenix, Arizona, that is composed mostly of Mexican and Mexican-American residents. Note that most of the residents trace their homeland to only a few northern Mexican states; immigrants from Mexico’s more southern states, such as Oaxaca and Veracruz, are relatively rare. (Adapted from Oberle and Arreola, 2008.)

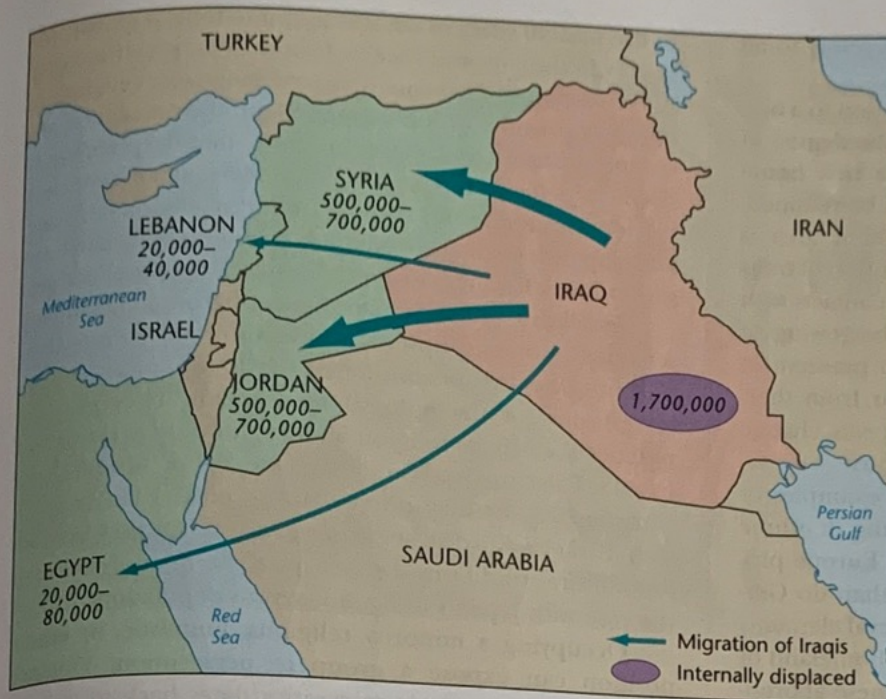


FIGURE 5.17 Iraqis displaced by conflict. This map shows the war-related displacement of more than 3 million Iraqis, who constitute involuntary migrants. Roughly half have left Iraq for neighboring countries. There, they may face discrimination and poverty as unwanted minority populations. In Syria, nearly one-third of Iraqi refugee children do not attend school because the infrastructure is not able to accommodate them. The UN refugee agency claims that this is the largest movement of displaced people in the Middle East since the Palestinian exodus after the establishment of Israel in 1948. (Adapted from BBC News, 2007.)

western United States to the Black Belt ethnic homeland in the South is one of the most notable such movements now under way. This type of ethnic migration is also channelized. Channelization is a process whereby a specific source region becomes linked to a particular destination, so that neighbors in the old place became neighbors in the new place as well. The 2010 census found that, thanks to migration from cities like Los Angeles and Philadelphia, the South is home to 57% of the black population. This proportion is higher than that at any time in the preceding 50 years. Black Americans are returning to the South, particularly to cities like Atlanta, because of greater economic opportunities there than elsewhere in the country. Cultural factors play a role as well, particularly the historic attachment to place and the perception that racial prejudice has lessened in the region. Return migration has recently revitalized the once-moribund Black homeland (see Figure 5.7, page 156).

Similarly, many of the 200,000 or so expatriate Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians left Russia and other former Soviet republics to return to their newly independent Baltic home countries in the 1990s, losing their ethnic status in the process. Clearly, migration of all kinds turns the ethnic mosaic into an ever-changing kaleidoscope.

Reflecting on Geography

Why might African-Americans have begun return migration to the South after 1975, and why did this movement accelerate in the 1990s?

Simplification and Isolation

When groups migrate and become ethnic in a new land, they have, in theory at least, the potential to introduce the totality of their culture by relocation diffusion. Conceivably, they could reestablish every facet of their traditional way of life in the area where they settle. However, ethnic immigrants never successfully introduce the totality of their culture. Rather, profound **cultural simplification** occurs. As geographer Cole Harris noted, "Europeans established overseas drastically simplified versions of European society." This happens, in part, because of chain migration: only fragments of a culture diffuse overseas, borne by groups from particular places migrating in particular eras. In other words, some simplification occurs at the point of departure. Moreover, far more cultural traits are implanted in the new home than actually survive. Only selected traits are successfully introduced, and others undergo considerable modification before becoming established in the new homeland. In other words, absorbing barriers prevent the diffusion of many traits, and permeable barriers cause changes in many other traits, greatly simplifying the migrant cultures. In addition, choices that did not exist in the old home become available to immigrant ethnic groups. They can borrow novel ways from those they encounter in the new land, invent new techniques better suited to the adopted place, or modify existing approaches

cultural simplification

The process by which immigrant ethnic groups lose certain aspects of their traditional culture in the process of settling overseas, creating a new culture that is less complex than the old.

as they see fit. Most immigrant ethnic groups resort to all these devices in varying degrees.

The displacement of a group and its relocation to a new homeland can have widely differing results. The degree of isolation an ethnic group experiences in the new home helps determine whether traditional traits will be retained, modified, or abandoned. If the new settlement area is remote and contacts with outsiders are few, diffusion of traits from the sending area is more likely. Because contacts with groups in the receiving area are rare, little borrowing of traits can occur. Isolated ethnic groups often preserve in archaic form cultural elements that disappear from their ancestral country; that is, they may, in some respects, change less than their kinfolk back in the mother country.

Language and dialects offer some good examples of this preservation of the archaic. Germans living in ethnic islands in the Balkan region of southeastern Europe preserve archaic South German dialects better than do Germans living in Germany itself, and some medieval elements survive in the Spanish spoken in the Hispano homeland of New Mexico. The highland location of Taiwanese aboriginal peoples helped maintain their archaic Formosan language, belonging to the Austronesian family, despite attempts by Chinese conquerors to acculturate them to the Han Chinese culture and language.



Globalization

What is the future of ethnicity and race? Will the potent forces of globalization erase ethnic differences and wipe out racism? Or do ethnicity and race provide enduring

constructs that predate—and will outlast—the global era? The perception of differences among human groups, whether based in visible physical traits, cultural practices, language differences, or religion, is probably as old as human civilization itself. For at least a century, however, the demise of ethnic groups has been predicted. The idea of capitalist America as a melting pot has been used to describe the process wherein the mixing of diverse peoples would eventually absorb everyone into American mainstream culture. In communist lands, Marxist doctrine preached that racism would vanish in the golden age of socialist egalitarianism. The fact that ethnic differences and racial strife still persist—and in some instances have worsened—points to their deeply rooted nature.

A Long View of Race and Ethnicity

In keeping with the notion that globalization is a process that has unfolded over several centuries, as opposed to only

in the past 40 years or so, it is useful to look at global concepts of ethnicity and race in historical perspective. Long-standing cohesion through shared language, religion, or ethnicity provides group members with the perception of a common history and shared destiny—that deep feeling of “we-ness”—that is the basis of the modern nation-state. Israel’s identity as a Jewish nation, Turkey’s common language, and Japan’s distinctive cultural traditions facilitated the groundwork for these groups to cohere as political entities.

Yet all three of these nation-states harbor long-standing tensions among groups that reside within the national borders but who are not considered (or do not consider themselves) part of the cultural mainstream. They may not practice the official religion of the country, as in the case of Israel’s Palestinians, who are made up of Muslims and Christians. They may not speak the official language, as with Turkey’s Kurdish-speaking minority. Or they may follow cultural traditions distinct from the mainstream, as is the case with Japan’s indigenous Ainu population.

Occupying a minority religious, linguistic, or ethnic position can expose a group to persecution. Violence against racial or ethnic minorities dates back to ancient times. The persecution of Jews, for example, began with pogroms, or widespread anti-Semitic rioting, during the Roman Empire some two millennia ago. Across medieval Europe, violence against Jews was episodic, occurring in Spain in the eleventh century, England in the twelfth century, Germany in the fourteenth century, and Russia in the nineteenth century. Anti-Semitic hate crimes still occur today throughout Europe and the United States. Yet when Israel was founded in 1948 as the only nation-state to have Judaism as its official religion, non-Jewish minorities were, in turn, marginalized. Even minority Jewish populations, such as the Mizrahim (Arab) Jews residing in Israel, “are excluded and marginalized not only from social and political centers, but . . . from the very definition of what it is to be ‘Israeli,’” claims Israeli anthropologist Pnina Motzafi-Haller. Thus, it appears that no place or time is free of tensions based in ethnic or racialized difference.

Reflecting on Geography

Why do you think racialized and ethnic differences are so deeply rooted in human cultures? What—if anything—might cause them to disappear?

Race and European Colonization

Europe’s colonization of vast territories in Africa, Asia, and Latin America was predicated on the drawing of sharp distinctions between the colonizers and the colonized. These distinctions were often depicted in racial terms. Indeed, conquered peoples were viewed as so different



FIGURE 5.18 *La Leyenda Negra*. Illustrations such as this gruesome depiction of Spanish conquistadores hanging and roasting indigenous people, while dashing their babies against a wall, were used to construct *La Leyenda Negra*, or “The Black Legend.” *La Leyenda Negra* was circulated in the sixteenth century by the Dutch and the British, Spain’s religious and colonial rivals. They wished to depict the Spaniards as cruel barbarians who had no moral business building empires in the New World. (akg-images.)

from Europeans that their very status as human beings was debated. The famous exchanges in the mid-sixteenth century between Caribbean-based Spanish priests and intellectuals in Spain is a case in point. Observing the abuses of indigenous populations firsthand led to an outcry by these clerics, who argued that the subjugated peoples were not these not men? Have they not rational souls? Must you not love them as you love yourselves?” asked Antonio de Montesinos in 1511, in a sermon delivered on the island of His-

paniola (**Figure 5.18**). These same clerics, however, saw no problem with owning black slaves, simply because they did not view them as human beings.

European colonialism frequently drew on existing ethnic and racial cleavages in colonized societies. Rwanda provides a tragic example of this practice. Rwanda is composed of two major ethnic groups: the Hutu, who, at 85 percent of the population, constitute the majority, and the minority Tutsi. Although differences in status have long existed between the two groups, it was not until the Belgian takeover of the territory in 1918 that the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi became racialized. Tutsis were given positions of power in the colonial government, educational system, and economic structure of colonial Rwanda under Belgian rule (**Figure 5.19**). Hutus’ physical differences from Tutsis were examined under a European racial lens. The shorter and darker Hutus were considered ugly, intellectually inferior, and natural slaves, whereas the taller, lighter



FIGURE 5.19 Identification card of a Rwandan Tutsi. In Rwanda, cards like this one were used to distinguish racialized Tutsis from Hutus. To show a card with “Tutsi” written on it was tantamount to a death sentence during the Rwandan genocide. Whether to instigate a mandatory national identification card is a hot topic in many nations faced with undocumented immigration today. Because these cards can serve to mark some groups as undesirable in some potentially dangerous way, you can understand why there is usually vigorous opposition to a national identification card. (Antony Njuguna/Reuters/Landov.)

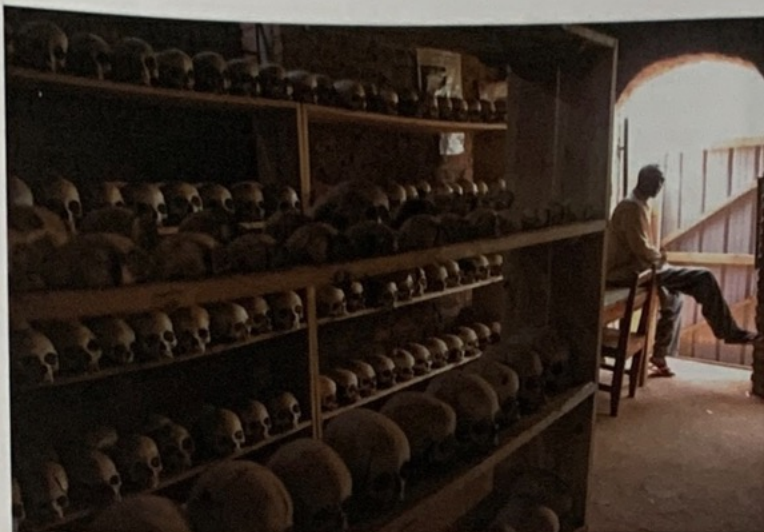


FIGURE 5.20 Rwandan genocide. These skulls are the remains of some 500,000 to 1,000,000 Tutsis, and their Hutu sympathizers, who were massacred over a period of four months in 1994 by Hutu militias. (Peter Van Agtmael/Polaris.)

Tutsis were extolled for their physical beauty and virtues of cultural refinement and leadership.

In 1959, the oppressed Hutu majority rebelled, leading to the deaths of some 20,000 Tutsis and the displacement of many more. Rwanda became independent from Belgium in 1961. Displaced Tutsi refugees regrouped in neighboring Uganda and in 1990 launched an invasion of Rwanda, demanding an end to racial discrimination and a reinstatement of their citizenship. Rapid deterioration of Hutu-Tutsi relations ensued, and plans to exterminate Tutsis and their Hutu sympathizers were promoted as the only way to rid Rwanda of its problems. In 1994, this **genocide** was conducted, resulting in the massacre of as many as 1 million people in the span of a few months (Figure 5.20).

As these examples illustrate, ethnic and racial distinctions provided central features of European colonization and the rise of nation-states. Yet, as we have seen, tensions based on race and ethnicity predate the modern era. Racial and ethnic conflict is far from erased from the face of today's global world and may in fact become aggravated as the bonds of the nation-state are loosened (see Subject to Debate, page 152).

Indigenous Identities in the Face of Globalization

Differences do not always cause conflict, tension, and oppression. Indeed, pride in one's ethnic or racial distinctiveness is common. Yet as revolutions in communications

and transportation bring diverse peoples into heightened contact with one another the world over, distinctive markers of ethnicity come under pressure. Exposure to seductive U.S.-based cultural practices—in music, cuisine, fashion, lifestyles, and values—is thought to encourage people to drop their distinctive ways in favor of adopting a homogeneous modern, Westernized culture.

Late in the twentieth century, however, an ethnic resurgence, especially among indigenous groups, became evident in many countries around the world. In a very real way, many ethnic groups and their geographical territories have become bulwarks of resistance to globalization. Yet it is too simplistic to romanticize indigenous groups as simply the keepers of ethnic distinctiveness in a globalizing world (Figure 5.21).

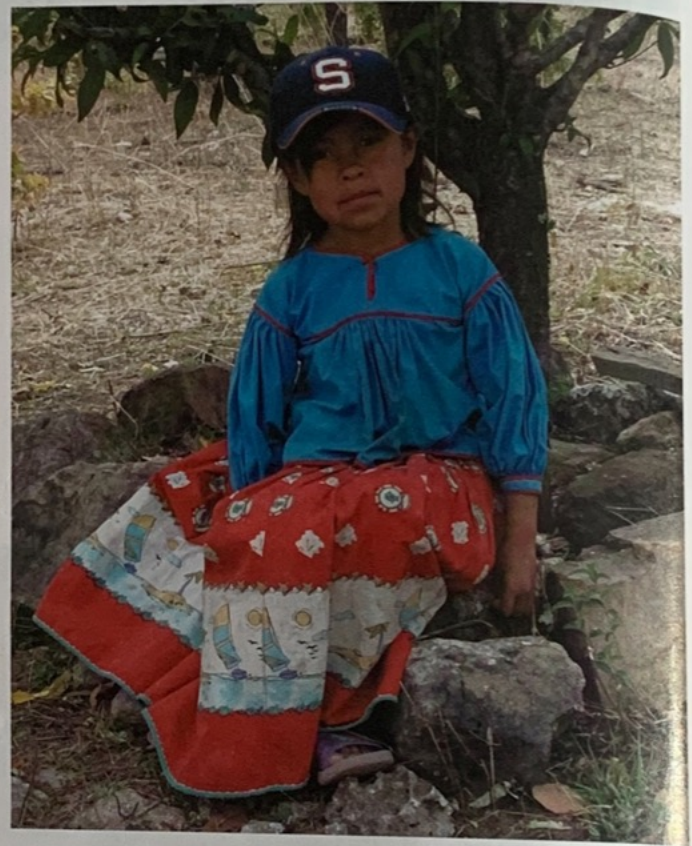


FIGURE 5.21 Native Huichol girl. Most contemporary indigenous peoples do not wear head-to-toe ethnic garb on a daily basis. Those who live in cities or regularly interact with the majority society may adopt Western-style dress full time. Others, perhaps those who live in smaller villages or those who do not interact often with the majority society, may blend indigenous and Western styles. Some indigenous peoples view indigenous clothing as a mark of ethnic pride and wear it daily regardless of their place of residence or level of interaction with the majority society. This Huichol girl blends a baseball cap with traditional dress, itself a blend of European and indigenous materials and styles. The Huicholes are residents of western Mexico. (Susana Valadez/Huichol Center.)

Members of indigenous groups must interpret the challenges as well as the opportunities offered by globalization and can be expected to modify their identities in complex ways.

In the Andean region of South America, for example, indigenous populations have both interpreted and resisted globalization. The Andes are a long, high mountain range that runs parallel to South America's Pacific coast. Their highland valleys, called *altiplano*, have been home to dense indigenous populations for millennia. Lynn Meisch describes the preservation of traditional forms of dress among the highland peoples of central Ecuador's Otavalo Valley. On conquest, the indigenous men were quickly put to work by the Spaniards in weaving workshops. Because they no longer had time to weave their family's clothing on traditional backstrap looms, and because they were legally prohibited from dressing like whites, they developed a distinctive style of dress in the sixteenth century. Although these garments are produced on European-style treadle looms rather than by traditional methods, their form and color mark those who wear them as *indígenas*, or natives, of the Otavalo Valley region.

Dress styles, like all other things cultural, change and evolve over time through conquest, diffusion of new techniques, and the whims of fashion. For Ecuador's indigenous highlanders, conquest by the Incas in 1495 meant a shift from the *manta*, or wrap, for men to the *camiseta*, or shirt. For women, typical dress has evolved from the *anaco*, a square cotton wrap held closed at the shoulders by copper or silver pins and bound at the waist by a belt called a *faja*, described by the Spaniard Sancho Paz Ponce just after Spanish conquest of the region in 1582. Today, women dress quite conservatively and retain many pre-Hispanic elements, including the red backstrap-woven *mama chumbi*, or mother belt, which is held shut by the *wawa chumbi*, or baby belt.

Meisch notes that community pressure discourages drastic change in styles of dress. "In the summer of 1989 a young woman wearing a green *anaku* [wrap skirt] was met by stares and murmurs of disapproval from other *indígenas* as she walked in Otavalo." Young men who appear in public without poncho and hat are referred to by older men as *lluchu*, meaning "naked." Meisch quotes 19-year-old Breenan Conteron: "When I leave my village to visit other cities in my country of Ecuador I always wear this costume because in this way I value and respect my ancestors, who fought to maintain their culture, traditions and customs. And I am proud that through my inheritance and in my blood I am a bearer of this culture." So much for globalization eradicating tradition! In this case, wearing traditional clothing has become a visible marker of ethnic pride.



Nature-Culture

How do ethnic groups interact with their habitats? Is there a special bond between ethnic groups and the land they inhabit that helps to form their self-identity? Do

ethnic groups find shelter in certain habitats? Are the areas inhabited by racialized groups targets of environmental racism? Ethnicity is very closely linked to the nature-culture theme. The possibilistic interplay between people and physical environment is often evident in the pattern of ethnic culture regions, in ethnic migration, and in ethnic persistence or survival. Ethnicity and race are sometimes also linked to the environment in harmful ways, particularly when the places they inhabit become the targets of pollution.

Cultural Preadaptation

For those ethnic groups created by migration or relocation diffusion, the concept of cultural preadaptation provides an interesting approach. **Cultural preadaptation** involves a complex of adaptive traits possessed by a group in advance of migration that gives them the ability to survive and a competitive advantage in colonizing the new environment. Most often, preadaptation occurs in groups migrating to a place environmentally similar to the one they left behind. The adaptive strategy they had pursued before migration works reasonably well in the new home.

cultural preadaptation
A complex of adaptive traits and skills possessed in advance of migration by a group, giving it survival ability and competitive advantage in occupying the new environment.

The preadaptation may be accidental, but in some cases the immigrant ethnic group deliberately chooses a destination area that physically resembles their former home. In Africa, the Bantu expansion mentioned in Chapter 4 was probably initially driven by climate change and expansion of the Sahara (see Figure 4.6, page 122). The Bantu spread south and west in search of forested lands similar to those they had previously inhabited. But their progress southward was finally inhibited because their agricultural techniques and cattle were not adapted to the drier Mediterranean climate of southern Africa.

The state of Wisconsin, dotted with scores of ethnic islands, provides some fine examples of preadapted immigrant groups that sought environments resembling their homelands. Particularly revealing are the choices of settlement sites made by the Finns, Icelanders, English, and Cornish who came to Wisconsin (Figure 5.22, page 172). The Finns—coming from a cold, thin-soiled, glaciated, lake-studded, coniferous forest zone in Europe—settled the North Woods of Wisconsin, a land similar in almost every

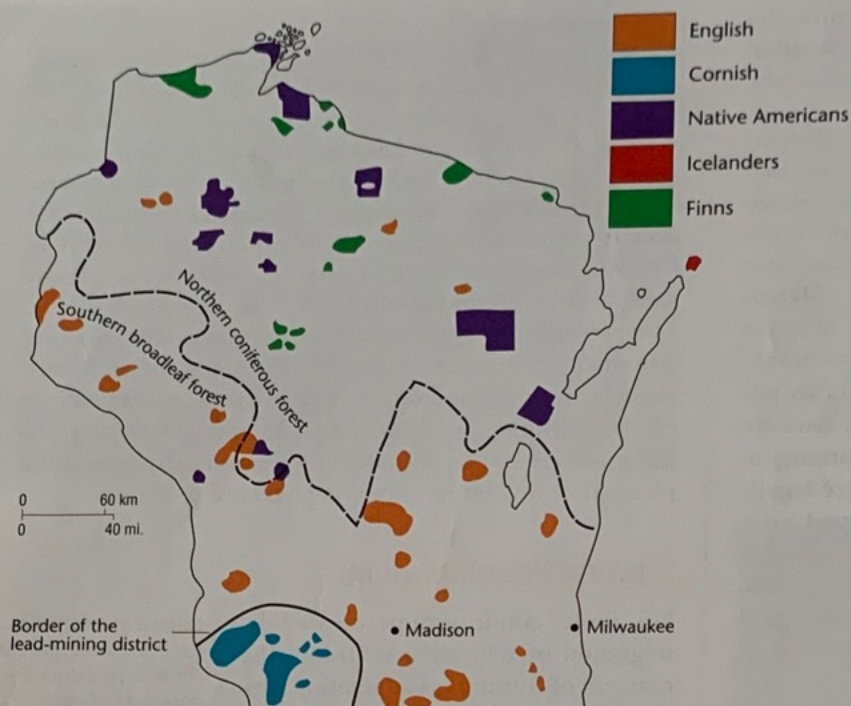


FIGURE 5.22 The ecology of selected ethnic islands in Wisconsin. Notice that Finnish settlements are concentrated in the infertile North Woods section, as are the Native American reservations. The Finns went there by choice, and the Native Americans survived there because few white people were interested in such land. The English, by contrast, are found more often in the better farmland south of the border of the North Woods. Some of the English were miners from Cornwall, and they were drawn to the lead-mining country of southwestern Wisconsin, where they could practice the profession already known to them. Icelanders, an island people, chose an island as their settlement site in Wisconsin. (After Hill, 1942.)

respect to the one from which they had migrated. Icelanders, from a bleak, remote island in the North Atlantic, located their only Wisconsin colony on Washington Island, an isolated outpost surrounded by the waters of Lake Michigan. The English, accustomed to good farmland, generally founded ethnic islands in the better agricultural districts of southern and southwestern Wisconsin. Cornish miners from the Celtic highlands of Cornwall in southwestern England sought out the lead-mining communities of southwestern Wisconsin, where they continued their traditional occupation.

Such ethnic niche-filling has continued to the present day. Cubans have clustered in southernmost Florida, the only part of the U.S. mainland to have a tropical savanna climate identical to that in Cuba, and many Vietnamese have settled as fishers on the Gulf of Mexico, especially in Texas and Louisiana, where they could continue their traditional livelihood. Yet historical and political patterns, as well as the factors driving chain migration discussed earlier, are also at work in these contemporary patterns of ethnic clustering. They act to temper the influence of the physical environment on ethnic residential selection, making it only one of many considerations.

This deliberate site selection by ethnic immigrants represents a rather accurate environmental perception of the new land. As a rule, however, immigrants tend to perceive the ecosystem of their new home as more like that of their abandoned native land than is actually the case. Their per-

ceptions of the new country emphasize the similarities and minimize the differences. Perhaps the search for similarity results from homesickness or an unwillingness to admit that migration has brought them to a largely alien land. Perhaps growing to adulthood in a particular kind of physical environment inhibits one's ability to perceive a different ecosystem accurately. Whatever the reason, the distorted perception occasionally caused problems for ethnic farming groups (for examples, see Chapter 8). A period of trial and error was often necessary to come to terms with the New World environment. Sometimes crops that thrived in the old homeland proved poorly suited to the new setting. In such cases, **cultural maladaptation** is said to occur.

cultural maladaptation
Poor or inadequate adaptation that occurs when a group pursues an adaptive strategy that, in the short run, fails to provide the necessities of life or, in the long run, destroys the environment that nourishes it.

Reflecting on Geography

Can you think of examples of cultures that were particularly maladapted to their new surroundings and experienced spectacular ecological failures as a result?

Habitat and the Preservation of Difference

Certain habitats may act to shelter and protect ethnically or racially distinct populations. The high altitudes and rugged terrain of many mountainous regions make these

areas relatively inaccessible and thus can provide refuge for minority populations while providing a barrier to outside influences. As we saw in the previous chapter on language, mountain dwellers sometimes speak archaic dialects or preserve their unique tongues thanks to the refuge provided by their habitat. In more general terms, the ways of life—including language—that are associated with ethnic distinctiveness are often preserved by a mountainous location.

The ethnic patchwork in the Caucasus region, for example, persists thanks in no small measure to the mountainous terrain found there. As Figure 5.23 shows, distinct groups occupy the rugged landscape of valleys, plateaus, peaks, foothills, steppes, and plains in this region. Religions and languages overlap in complex ways with ethnic identities and are made even more confounding by the geopolitical

boundaries in this region, which do not necessarily follow the contours of the Caucasian ethnic mosaic. Thus, although this is one of the most ethnically diverse places on Earth, the Caucasus region has seen more than its fair share of conflict as well, much of it ethnically motivated.

Islands, too, can provide a measure of isolation and protection for ethnically or racially distinct groups. The Gullah, or Geechee, people are descendants of African slaves brought to the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to work on plantations. Many of their nearly 10,000 descendants today inhabit coastal islands of South Carolina, Georgia, and north Florida. Their island location has allowed much of the original African cultural roots to be preserved, so much so that the Gullah are sometimes called the most African-American community in the



FIGURE 5.23 Ethnic pluralities in the Caucasus. The Caucasus Mountains, located in Southwest Asia, are home to one of the world's most ethnically diverse populations. They are also the site of much ethnically based conflict. Because ethnic territories often overlap, this map depicts pluralities. The populations shown comprise at least 40 percent of that place's ethnic population and in most cases also constitute a majority population, although some of the more heterogeneous areas have no dominant ethnic population. The racialized term *Caucasian* is derived from this area's name, although, in fact, it has little to do with the people actually living in this region. (Adapted from O'Loughlin et al., 2007.)



FIGURE 5.24 Arab slum in Delhi, India. This ethnic neighborhood is home to low-income Arabs, who are an ethnic minority population in India. Nearly 50 percent of Delhi's residents live in slums or unauthorized settlements. (Viviane Dalles/REA/Redux.)

United States. Today, as the tourist industry sets its sights on developing these coastal islands, and as Gullah youth migrate elsewhere in search of opportunity, the survival of this unique culture is in question.

Environmental Racism

Not only people but also the places where they dwell can be labeled by society as minority. And it is a fact that, although belonging to a racial or ethnic minority group does not necessarily lead to poverty, the two often go hand-in-hand. In spatial terms, being poor frequently equals having the last and worst choice of where to live. In cities, that means impoverished and racialized minorities often reside in run-down, ecologically precarious, or peripheral places that no one else wants to inhabit (Figure 5.24). In rural areas, racialized and indigenous minorities work the smallest and least fertile lands, or—more commonly—they work the plots of others, having become dispossessed of their own lands.

environmental racism
The targeting of areas where ethnic or racial minorities live with respect to environmental contamination or failure to enforce environmental regulations.

Environmental racism refers to the likelihood that a racialized minority population inhabits a polluted area. As Robert Bullard asserts, "Whether by conscious design or institutional neglect, communities of color in urban ghettos, in rural 'poverty

pockets,' or on economically impoverished Native American reservations face some of the worst environmental devastation in the nation." In the United States, Hispanics, Native Americans, and blacks are more likely than whites to reside in places where toxic wastes are dumped, polluting industries are located, or environmental legislation is not enforced. Inner-city populations, which in many U.S. cities are disproportionately made up of minorities, occupy older buildings contaminated with asbestos and toxic lead-based paints. Farmworkers, who in the United States are disproportionately Hispanic, are exposed to high levels of pesticides, fertilizers, and other agricultural chemicals. Native American reservation lands are targeted as possible sites for disposing of nuclear waste.

As Figure 5.25 depicts, there is an overlap of nonwhite populations and toxic release facilities that is difficult to explain away as simply a random coincidence. Rather, areas such as the city of South Gate, located in Los Angeles County, have seen contaminating industries and activities purposely located in what is today a neighborhood composed of more than 90 percent Latino residents. In its early days, South Gate was inhabited mostly by white non-Hispanics. From its founding in 1923 until the 1960s, some of the largest U.S. polluters located their operations there:

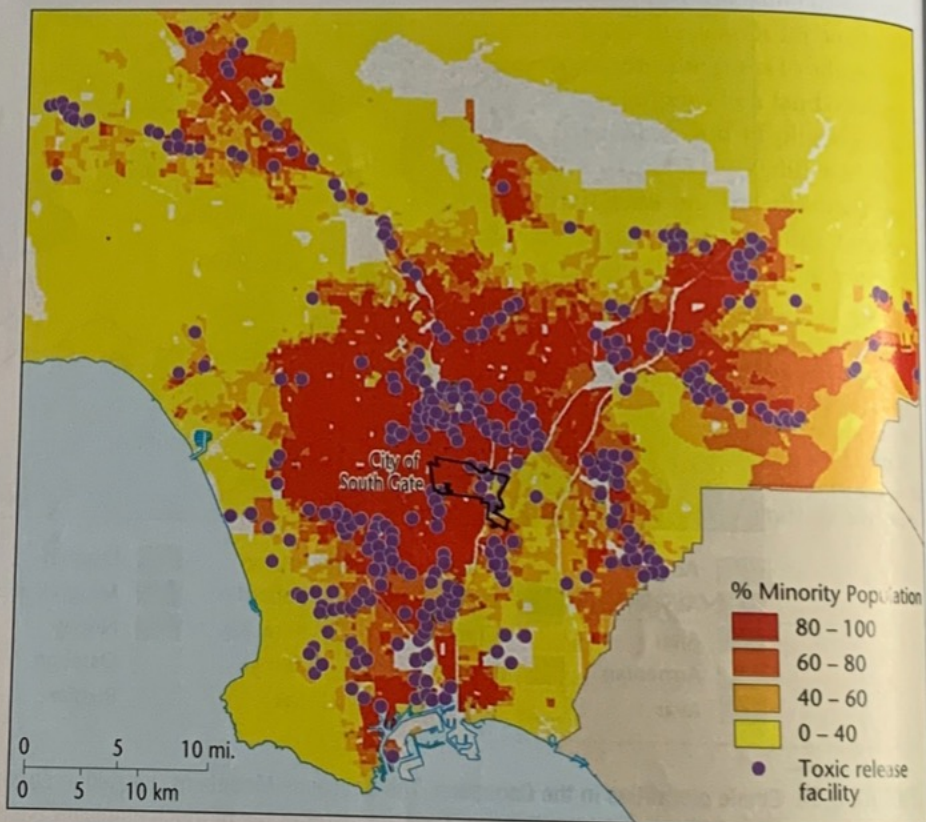


FIGURE 5.25 Environmental racism in Los Angeles. The map of Los Angeles County's nonwhite population concentrations overlaps closely with the map of toxic release facility locations in Los Angeles County. It is hard to believe that this is simply a coincidence. (Sources: Adapted from Toxic Release Inventory [U.S. EPA], 1996; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990.)

Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, A. R. Maas Chemical Company, Bethlehem Steel, Alcoa Aluminum, and hundreds of smaller operations were allowed to set up shop in a period when few were aware of the health consequences of their activities. These industries attracted labor arriving from Mexico. During this period, the neighborhood was encircled by four major freeways and a flight path was routed overhead. Pollution resulting from the transportation-related fossil fuels added to the industrial waste in this community. As the deleterious health impacts of these environmental factors became more evident, white residents began to move away, being replaced by Hispanics, some 30 percent of whom are believed to be recent undocumented immigrants. Although many of the industries are now closed, their contaminants remain in the soil and water.

Racialized minority populations are not powerless in the face of environmental racism. Organizations such as

Communities for a Better Environment work with local residents, such as those living in South Gate, to promote research, legal assistance, and activism. *Environmental justice* is the general term for the movement to redress environmental racism.

Environmental racism extends to the global scale. Industrial countries often dispose of their garbage, industrial waste, and other contaminants in poor countries. Industries headquartered in wealthy nations often outsource the dangerous and polluting phases of production to countries that do not have—or do not enforce—strict environmental legislation. Whether areas inhabited by poor, ethnic, or racialized minorities are deliberately targeted for unhealthy conditions, or whether they are simply the unfortunate recipients of the effects of larger detrimental processes, the connections among race, ethnicity, and the environment pose central questions for cultural geographers.



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

What traces do ethnicity and race leave on the landscape? Ethnic and racialized landscapes often differ from mainstream landscapes in the styles

of traditional architecture, in the patterns of surveying the land, in the distribution of houses and other buildings, and in the degree to which they “humanize” the land. Often the imprint is subtle, discernible only to those who pause

and look closely. Sometimes it is quite striking, flaunted as an **ethnic flag**: a readily visible marker of ethnicity on the landscape that strikes even the un-

ethnic flag
A readily visible marker of ethnicity on the landscape.

trained eye (Figure 5.26). Sometimes the distinctive markers of race and ethnicity are not visible at all but rather are audible, tactile, olfactory, or—as we explore shortly with culinary landscapes—tasty.

Urban Ethnic Landscapes

Ethnic cultural landscapes often appear in urban settings, in both neighborhoods and ghettos. A fine example is the

FIGURE 5.26 An “ethnic flag” in the cultural landscape. This maize granary, called a *cuezcumatl*, is unique to the indigenous population of Tlaxcala state, Mexico. The structure holds shelled maize. In Mexico, even the cultivation of maize long remained an indigenous trait because the Spaniards preferred wheat. (www.photographersdirect.com.)





FIGURE 5.27 Mexican-American exterior mural, Barrio Logan, San Diego, California. This mural bears an obvious ideological/political message and helps create a sense of this place as a Mexican-American neighborhood. See also Arreola, 1984. (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

brightly colored exterior mural typically found in Mexican-American ethnic neighborhoods in the southwestern United States (Figure 5.27). These began to appear in the 1960s in Southern California, and they exhibit influences rooted in both the Spanish and the indigenous cultures of Mexico according to geographer Daniel Arreola (see *Practicing Geography*). A wide variety of wall surfaces, from apartment house and store exteriors to bridge abutments, provide the space for this ethnic expression. The subjects portrayed are also wide-ranging, from religious motifs to political ideology, from statements about historical wrongs to ones about urban zoning disputes. Often they are specific to the site,

incorporating well-known elements of the local landscape and thus heightening the sense of place and ethnic “turf.” Inscriptions can be in either Spanish or English, but many Mexican murals do not contain a written message, relying instead on the sharpness of image and vividness of color to make an impression.

Usually, the visual ethnic expression is more subtle. Color alone can connote and reveal ethnicity to the trained eye. Red, for example, is a venerated and auspicious color to the Chinese, and when they established Chinatowns in Canadian and American cities, red surfaces proliferated (Figure 5.28). Light blue is a Greek ethnic color, derived from



FIGURE 5.28 Two urban ethnic landscapes. (Left) Houses painted red reveal the addition of a Toronto residential block to the local Chinatown. (Right) The use of light blue trim, the Greek color, coupled with the planting of a grape arbor at the front door of a dwelling in the Astoria district of Queens, New York City, marks the neighborhood as Greek. (Courtesy of Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov.)

PRACTICING GEOGRAPHY

For Daniel Arreola, practicing geography is a family affair. He traces his interest in cultural geography to his grandfathers. His paternal grandfather owned a ranch outside of Escondido, California, where Professor Arreola spent several summers during his youth. "The trip in Santa Monica was always an adventure and surely imprinted my later desire to travel. The experience of the out-of-doors in the San Diego backcountry was a wonderland of nature during the 1950s and helped cultivate my attraction to ranch living Mexican style." His grandfather on his mother's side took him on frequent walks through the neighborhood and to the beach. "As part of those wanderings, he would tell me stories about the people and places we passed through, and this experience no doubt branded me as an observer and cemented my passion for walking as exploration."

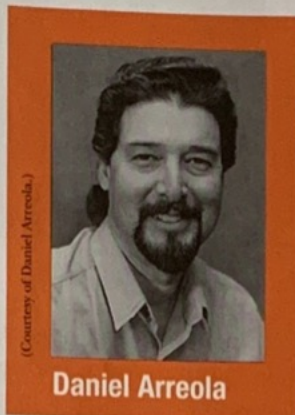
Professor Arreola has written a number of books, including the award-winning *Tejano South Texas: A Mexican American Cultural Province*. In this book, he examines the physical, historical, and social aspects of south Texas that make it an ethnic homeland distinct from other areas of Mexican-American population in the United States. Professor Arreola's concern with illuminating the diverse cultural geographic patterns within Latino communities in the United States is taken up again in his newest edited collection, titled *Hispanic Places, Latino Places* (2004).

For Professor Arreola, research is actually a two-step process involving re-search and search. "To do any type of investigation, one must first re-search—in other words, examine and come to some understanding of what others have written about a subject." Typically, this involves reading materials in the library and in archives where written

or visual records are stored. The most interesting part of the project—the search—comes next. "Search as opposed to re-search means discovery of new information, and the best way to discover is to go into the field. Geographers, since ancient times, have been entrusted with the responsibility to describe the surface of the Earth." Typically, he uses the case study method, which he describes as "an empirical inquiry that enables me to examine a contemporary place in its real-life context, and where the

boundaries between the place I am studying and its geographical context are not clearly evident. As part of my case study method, I depend on diachronic inquiry, or understanding of past situations relevant to the place I am studying, because to understand a contemporary place almost always necessitates an appreciation of a past for that place." Professor Arreola does interviews, draws maps, and takes photographs of the places where he works.

His interest in the way places look and how places change over time has shaped Professor Arreola's current project. He began to collect historical postcards of the borderlands region between Mexico and the United States about 15 years ago, and now he has thousands of them. He has visited the places where these pictures were originally taken and rephotographed about 100 of them from the same perspectives as the originals in order to assess how these border places have changed during three separate time periods: the 1920s, the 1930s/1940s, and the 1950s/1960s. As part of the fieldwork for this project, he interviewed local residents of different generations to understand how residents remember place. He says, "I hope to combine my understanding of landscape change through my visual documentation with the oral histories of place residents to tell the story of changing border communities."



Daniel Arreola

the flag of their ancestral country. Not only that, but Greeks also avoid red, which is perceived as the color of their ancient enemy, the Turks. Green, an Irish Catholic color, also finds favor in Muslim ethnic neighborhoods (Figure 5.29, page 178) in countries as far-flung as France and China because it is the sacred color of Islam (see Chapter 7).

Indeed, urban ethnic and racial landscapes are visible in cities across the world. This is true even when urban

planners try their best to prevent the emergence of such landscapes. When Brazil's capital was moved from Rio de Janeiro to Brasília in 1960, for example, very few pedestrian-friendly public spaces were incorporated into the urban plan of architects Lúcio Costa and Oscar Niemeyer. Rather, residences were concentrated in high-rise apartments called *superquadra*; streets were designed for high-speed motor traffic only; and no smaller plazas, cafés, or



FIGURE 5.29 Ethnic storefront in Coney Island, New York. The liberal use of the color green in this storefront design might indicate an Islamic presence. Indeed, this is a Pakistani ethnic grocery. (© David Grossman/Alamy.)

sidewalks were included—all of which discouraged informal socialization (**Figure 5.30**). As historian James C. Scott notes in his discussion of Brasília, the lack of human-scale public gathering places was intentional. “Brasília was to be an exemplary city, a center that would transform the lives of the Brazilians who lived there—from their personal habits and household organization to their social lives, leisure, and work. The goal of making over Brazil and Brazilians necessarily implied a disdain for what Brazil had been.” But because the housing needs of those building the city and serving the government workers had not been planned, Brasília soon developed surrounding slums that

did not follow an orderly layout. And because the desires of wealthier residents were not met by the uniform *superquadra* apartments, unplanned but luxurious residences and private clubs were also built. By 1980, 75 percent of Brasília’s population lived in unanticipated settlements. And because, as previously mentioned, Brazil’s social structure is in part based on skin pigmentation, it is the poorer and darker-skinned workers who live in the peripheral slums, whereas the wealthier and lighter-skinned residents tend to live in isolated enclaves for the rich. Thus, a racialized landscape of wealth and poverty emerged in Brasília despite all efforts to the contrary.



FIGURE 5.30 The planned urban landscape of Brasília. As you can see from this aerial view, Brasília is a city of straight roadways, high-rise residential superquadra, and green spaces in between. It is a city that was literally built from scratch in an area of cleared jungle in Brazil’s Amazonian interior. This allowed the planners to follow a modern urban design blueprint down to the last detail. Residents of Brasília complain that its larger-than-life public spaces, high-speed vehicle traffic, and impersonal housing blocks inhibit socialization and make Brasília a difficult place to live. (Cassio Vasconcellos/SambaPhoto/Getty Images.)

The Re-Creation of Ethnic Cultural Landscapes

As mentioned previously in this chapter, migration is the principal way in which groups not ethnic in their home-lands become ethnic or racialized, through relocation to a new place. As we have seen, ethnic groups may choose to relocate to places that remind them of their old home-lands. Once there, they set about re-creating some—although, because of cultural simplification, not all—of their particular landscapes in their new homes.

Cuban-American immigrants, for example, have reconstructed aspects of their prerevolutionary Cuban homeland in Miami. In the early 1960s, the first wave of Cuban refugees came to the United States on the heels of Castro's communist revolution on the island. Some went north, to places such as Union City, New Jersey, where today there is a sizable Cuban-American population. Others, however, came (or eventually relocated) to Miami. Once a predominantly Jewish neighborhood called Riverside, what is today called the Little Havana neighborhood became the heart of early Cuban immigration. Shops along the main thoroughfare, Calle Ocho (or Southwest Eighth Street), reflect the Cuban origins of the residents: grocers such as Sedanos and La Roca cater to the Spanish-inspired culinary traditions of Cuba; cafés selling small cups of strong, sweet *café Cubano* exist on every block; and famed restaurants such as Versailles are social gathering points for Cuban-Americans.

Because ethnicity and its expression on the landscape are fluid and ever-changing, the landscape of Calle Ocho reflects the current demographic changes under way in Little Havana. Although the neighborhood is still a Latino enclave, with a Hispanic population of over 95 percent, only half identify as "Cuban identity." More than one-quarter of Little Havana's residents are recent arrivals from Central American countries, particularly Nicaragua and Honduras, whereas more and more Argentineans and Colombians are arriving—like the Cubans before them—on the heels of political and economic chaos in their home countries. Today, you are just as likely to see a Nicaraguan *fritanga* restaurant as a Cuban coffee shop along Calle Ocho. This has prompted some to suggest that the neighborhood's name be changed from Little Havana to The Latin Quarter (Figure 5.31).

Geographer Christopher Airriess has studied Vietnamese refugees in the United States. These refugees were initially brought to one of four reception centers, and then further relocated to rural and urban locations throughout the country, on the theory that spatial dispersal would hasten their assimilation into mainstream U.S. society. Airriess's work reveals that a process of secondary, chain migration later led many of them to cluster in selected urban areas that offer warm weather and proximity to Vietnamese friends and relatives. Focusing on the Versailles neighborhood of New Orleans, Airriess found that the fact that the neighborhood is surrounded by swamps, canals, or bayous



FIGURE 5.31 Restaurant in Little Havana, Miami. How many different national groups are identified in this restaurant façade? (Courtesy of Patricia L. Price.)

on three sides affords a degree of cultural isolation from other ethnic groups in the city. This has led to Versailles becoming an *ethnic neighborhood* where Vietnamese refugees re-create elements of their home landscape in the United States. The most prominent ethnic flag of the Vietnamese in Versailles is the vegetable gardens found on the perimeter of the neighborhood. Cultural preadaptation has led to the reproduction of Vietnamese rural landscapes here, sometimes with plants sent directly from Vietnam. It is the older Vietnamese who plant and tend the gardens. Such gardening provides a therapeutic activity, allows them to retain traditional dietary habits, enables them to produce folk medicines from plants, and reduces household food expenditures. Airriess notes that “the image of conical-hat-wearing gardeners leaning over plants within a multi-textured and moisture-soaked, vibrant green agricultural scene, coupled with frequent flyovers of military helicopters, is an eerie scene of wartime Vietnam reproduced.”

After Hurricane Katrina devastated sections of New Orleans—including Versailles (today more commonly called Village de L'est)—in 2005, the ethnic cultural landscape underwent a transformation. Many Vietnamese immigrants moved away from Versailles after the storm, whereas many Hispanics moved into the area, attracted by the many post-Katrina construction jobs. A 2006 survey found nearly 7000 Asians in New Orleans after Katrina, compared to nearly 12,000 before the storm. By contrast, Latinos have grown from about 14,000 before the hurricane to 16,000 post-Katrina: the only ethnic group, in fact, to have increased after 2005. Today, the commercial landscape reflects this transition. The first arrivals on the scene were the *loncheras*, or mobile lunch trucks (Figure 5.32). Then came the Hispanic-oriented restaurants, supermarkets, and services. Today, the remaining Vietnamese-American residents are learning to adapt to the newcomers. Sara Catania recounts how Mai Thi Nguyen, a business development director in Village de L'est, reports that her

aunt, a market owner, “is learning Spanish. She’s learning to say hello, how to tell customers how much something costs. It’s wild. I love it. It’s exciting.”

Reflecting on Geography

What common ground might Vietnamese-American and Hispanic immigrants have that could help them to bridge their differences?

Ethnic Culinary Landscapes

“Tell me what you eat, and I’ll tell you who you are.” This oft-quoted phrase arises from the connections between identity and **foodways**, or the customary behaviors associated with food preparation and consumption. Customary behaviors associated with food preparation and consumption. Foodways vary from place to place and from ethnic group to ethnic group (Figure 5.33). As geographers Barbara and James Shortridge point out, “Food is a sensitive indicator of identity and change.” Immigration, intermarriage, technological innovation, and the availability of certain ingredients mean that modifications and simplifications of traditional foods are inevitable over time. An examination of culinary cultural landscapes reveals that, although landscapes are typically understood to be visual entities, they can be constructed from the other four senses as well: touch, smell, sound, and—in this case—taste.

Although Singapore occupies the southern tip of the Malaysian Peninsula in extreme Southeast Asia, its cuisine draws heavily from southern Chinese cooking. This is because three-quarters of Singapore’s multiethnic population is of Chinese ancestry. Intermarriage between Chinese men, who came to Singapore as traders and settled there, and local Malay women resulted in a distinctive spicy cuisine called *nonya*. As we have already seen, there are far more ethnic Chinese in Asia than in other parts of the world, principally because of China’s proximity to other Asian countries.



FIGURE 5.32 Lunch truck in New Orleans.

Loncheras, or mobile lunch trucks, are found in areas of New Orleans that suffered devastation from Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Mexican workers were attracted to New Orleans after 2005 because of opportunities to work in the construction sector as neighborhoods rebuilt. Lunch trucks cater to Mexican immigrant tastes and budgets.

(Russell McCullev/AFP/Getty Images)



FIGURE 5.33 Market in Chinatown, New York City. Grocery stores selling distinctive produce items are one of the most visible landscape markers of an ethnic presence. Here, the spiny fruits hanging from the bags are called durian, also known as “stinky fruit.” Durian is sometimes banned from public places in its native Asia because of its pungent smell. (AP Photo/Kathy Willens.)

The corn tortilla remains a staple of central Mexican foodways and is consumed at every meal by some families. But many middle-class urban women in Mexico no longer have the time to soak, hull, and grind corn by hand to make corn tortillas from scratch. Rather, children are often sent every afternoon to the corner *tortillería* to purchase *masa*, or corn dough, or even hot stacks of the finished product. Convenience notwithstanding, old-timers complain that the uniform machine-made tortillas will never come close to the flavor and texture of a handmade tortilla. In some regions, notably in the northern part of Mexico and southern Texas, the labor-intensive corn tortilla was replaced altogether by wheat tortillas, which are much easier to make.

Geographer Daniel Arreola has plotted the Taco-Burrito and the Taco-Barbecue isoglosses in southwestern Texas shown in **Figure 5.34**. These lines show the transition between different Mexican culinary influences (tacos versus burritos) and between Mexican and European foodways (tacos versus barbecue), with the barbecue sandwich preferred by the German, Czech, Scandinavian, Anglo, and black Texan populations to the north and east of the line.

In the rural, mountainous Appalachian region of the eastern United States, distinct ethnic foodways persist and literally flavor this region. Geographer John Rehder observed that, during and after World War II, Appalachians maintained their cultural distinctiveness in the face of migration to northern cities in part through “care packages” of lard, dried beans, grits, cornmeal, and other foods unavailable in the North. Grocery stores in the Little Appalachia ethnic neighborhoods that formed in cities such as Detroit,

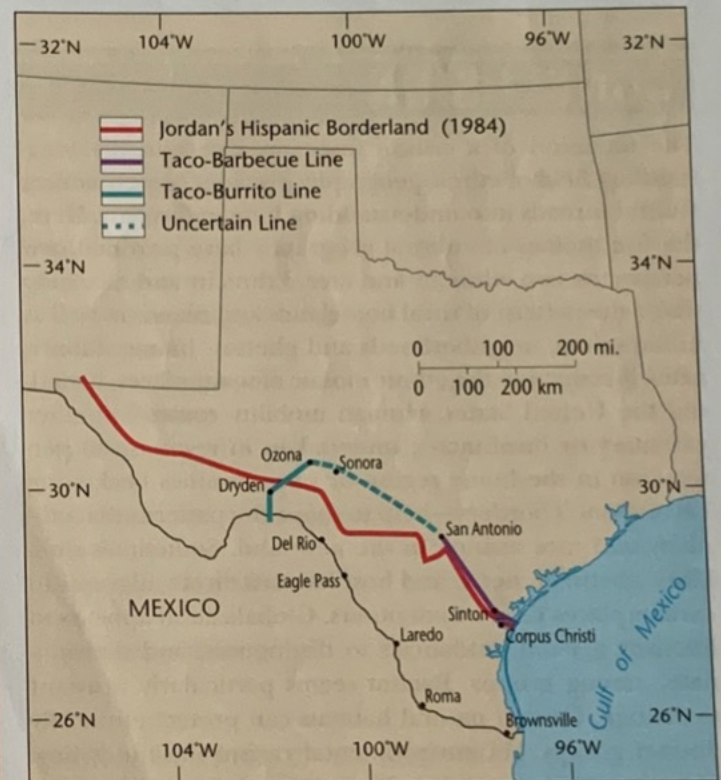


FIGURE 5.34 The Taco-Burrito and Taco-Barbecue lines. The transition between different styles of Mexican, and Mexican and European, foodways is depicted on this map of Texas. Note that the lines coincide with the borders of the Hispanic homeland as defined by Terry Jordan. In this map, Daniel Arreola builds on that work. (Sources: After Arreola, 2002: 175; Jordan, 1984.)

Cleveland, and Chicago soon began to cater to the distinct food preferences of the population. Thus, Appalachian foodways were maintained as Appalachians moved north.

Rehder tells of sending students on a scavenger hunt during a class field trip to Pikeville, Tennessee. To one young man, he handed a card that read, "What are cat head biscuits and sawmill gravy?"

About a half an hour later, my "biscuit man" returned with a scared look on his face and tears welling up in his eyes. I asked, "Where did you go and what happened?" He replied, "Well, . . . I . . . went to the feed store and asked an old man there, 'What are cat head biscuits and sawmill gravy?' just like you told me to do. Only the old man just growled at me and said, 'Son, if you don't know, HELL, I ain't goin' to tell you!' And with that our lad left the feed store dejected and thoroughly upset. To calm him down, I said, 'Why don't you just go on down to the café."

CONCLUSION

The inclusion of a critical focus on race into the long-standing field of ethnic geography provides contemporary, fruitful inroads into understanding human diversity. Here, the five themes of cultural geography have provided new perspectives on ethnicity and race. Ethnicity and race help shape the pattern of rural homelands and islands as well as urban ethnic neighborhoods and ghettos. Immigration is actively reshaping the ethnic mosaic of many places, including the United States. Human mobility routes—whether voluntary or involuntary, undertaken in response to persecution in the home region or opportunities beckoning beyond one's borders—help to shape the patterns that ethnicity and race assume in the new land. Sometimes similarities between home and host habitats direct migrants to certain places rather than others. Globalization appears to intensify age-old tendencies to distinguish, and discriminate, among groups. Racism seems particularly resistant to change. Certain natural habitats can protect ethnically distinct groups. Yet environmental racism illustrates how minority peoples and the places they inhabit can become the targets of undesirable practices, such as pollution. On the flip side, ethnic pride and the active construction of ethnically and racially distinct landscapes are evident the world over.

By now, we hope you are beginning to think and see as geographers do. The world is patterned in terms of cul-

Get a little something to drink and maybe calmly run your question by them down there." After a sufficient amount of time, I decided to go check on him. He was sitting on a red upholstered stool at the counter. As I drew closer, he looked up and, with fresh and quite different tears in his eyes, pointed to his plate: "This," he said proudly, "is cat head biscuits and sawmill gravy!" (p. 208)

Rehder explains that cat head biscuits are flour biscuits made in the exact size and shape of a cat's head and baked golden in a wood stove. Sawmill gravy is a southern-style white gravy made in a cast-iron skillet. Legend has it that the cook at the Little River Lumber Company logging camp ran out of flour for the gravy and substituted cornmeal. The loggers complained about the texture, referring to it as "sawmill gravy." For further discussion of ethnicity and food, see *Doing Geography and Seeing Geography* (page 184).

ture. What these patterns are, why they change, how they change, and how these changes affect people living in places are the basic focus of cultural geography. Ethnicity, along with language and religion, is at the heart of many of today's most pressing political geography questions.

DOING GEOGRAPHY

Tracing Ethnic Foodways Through Recipes

At some point in our family histories, we all trace our roots back to migrants. Perhaps your ancestors walked here some 30,000 years ago. Perhaps they arrived on slave ships in the seventeenth century. Perhaps they were traders who settled and married locals. Were they part of the waves of Europeans in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, or have you yourself only recently immigrated? More than likely, your ethnic inheritance results from a combination of different immigrant groups. As the geographer Doreen Massey wrote, "In one sense or another most places have been 'meeting places'; even their 'original inhabitants' usually came from somewhere else." In other words, if you dig into the history of any place, you'll find layers on layers of people coming in from other places and bringing their cultural baggage—recipes and all—with them.

For this exercise, you will analyze one of the most commonplace, yet revealing, items of ethnic geography: a recipe. Certainly, you are what you eat, but you also eat where you are, and the foodways in which you take an active part are very revealing of both who you are and where you are. Even