

# Chapter

# 7

# Ethnicities



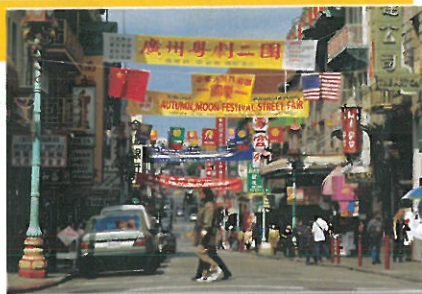
Why was this bridge blown up? Page 250



Why are these people burning torches on a mountain? Page 243

## KEY ISSUE 1

**Where Are Ethnicities Distributed?**

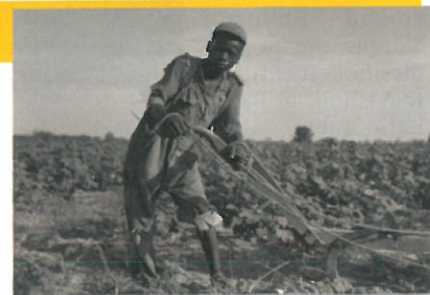


### A World of Ethnicities p. 227

Hispanics, African Americans, and Asian Americans are the most numerous U.S. ethnicities.

## KEY ISSUE 2

**Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?**



### Ethnic Segregation p. 232

Migration of ethnicities can result in patterns of segregation, sometimes caused by discrimination.

## KEY ISSUE 3

## Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

Holy places and holidays in a universalizing religion are related to events in the life of its founder or prophet and are related to the local physical geography in an ethnic religion. Religions affect the landscape in other ways: Religious communities are built, religious toponyms mark the landscape, and extensive tracts are reserved for burying the dead.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.1:** Compare the role of places of worship in various religions.

- Religions have places of worship, but these places play differing roles for the various religions.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.2:** Explain why places are sacred in universalizing religions.

- In universalizing religions, holy places derive from events in the founder's life.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.3:** Analyze the importance of the physical geography in ethnic religions.

- In ethnic religions, holy places derive from the physical geography where the religion's adherents are clustered.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.4:** Describe ways in which the landscape is used in religiously significant ways.

- Religions have varying practices for handling the dead.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.5:** Compare the calendars and holidays of ethnic and universalizing religions.

- In ethnic religions, holidays derive from the physical geography where the religion is clustered.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.3.6:** Compare the administrative organization of hierarchical and locally autonomous religions.

- Religions can be divided into those that are administered through a hierarchy and those that are locally autonomous.

**THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY 6.3:** Some Christians believe that they should be prepared to carry the word of God and the teachings of Jesus Christ to people who have not been exposed to them, at any time and at any place. Are missionary activities equally likely to occur at any time and at any place, or are some places more suited than others? Why?

**GOOGLE EARTH 6.3:** What is the physical environment around Badrinath Temple, one of Hindu's holiest temples, to Vishnu, in Badrinath, India?



**Pagan** (p. 190) A follower of a polytheistic religion.

**Pilgrimage** (p. 202) A journey to a place considered sacred for religious purposes.

**Polytheism** (p. 191) Belief in or worship of more than one god.

**Sect** (p. 186) A relatively small group that has broken away from an established denomination.

**Solstice** (p. 205) An astronomical event that happens twice each year, when the tilt of Earth's axis is most inclined toward or away from the Sun, causing the Sun's apparent position in the sky to reach its most northernmost or southernmost extreme, and resulting in the shortest and longest days of the year.

**Syncretic** (p. 190) A religion that combines several traditions.

**Universalizing religion** (p. 184) A religion that attempts to appeal to all people, not just those living in a particular location.

## KEY ISSUE 4

## Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

With Earth's surface dominated by four large religions, expansion of the territory occupied by one religion may reduce the territory of another. In addition, religions must compete for control of territory with nonreligious ideas, notably communism and economic modernization.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.4.1:** Understand reasons for religious conflicts arising from government policies.

- Religions can come into conflict with government policies, social changes, or other religions.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.4.2:** Summarize reasons for conflicts between religions.

- Conflicts among religions have been especially strong in Ireland and in the Middle East.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.4.3:** Analyze reasons for religious conflict in the Middle East.

- Religious conflict in the Middle East goes back thousands of years. Jews, Muslims, and Christians have fought for control of the Middle East land that is now part of Israel/Palestine.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.4.4:** Describe differences in geographic frameworks in the Middle East.

- Combatants in the Middle East have different perspectives on the division of land in the area.

**LEARNING OUTCOME 6.4.5:** Explain the importance of Jerusalem to Jews and Muslims.

- The most sacred space in Jerusalem for Muslims was built on top of the most sacred space for Jews.

**THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY 6.4:** Sharp differences in demographic characteristics, such as natural increase, crude birth, and migration rates, can be seen among Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Middle East and between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. How might demographic differences affect future relationships among the groups in these two regions?

**GOOGLE EARTH 6.4:** The Abraj Al Bait (Royal Hotel Clock Tower) in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the tallest hotel in the world, towers over what holy Muslim structure described in this chapter?



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## KEY ISSUE 1

# Where Are Ethnicities Distributed?

- Ethnicities in the United States
- Distribution of Ethnicities in the United States

**Ethnicity** is identity with a group of people who share the cultural traditions of a particular homeland or hearth. The word *ethnicity* comes from the Greek word *ethnikos*, which means “national.” Ethnicity is important to geographers because its characteristics derive from the distinctive features of particular places on Earth.

Ethnicity is often confused with **race**, which is identity with a group of people who share a biological ancestor. The word *race* comes from a middle-French word for “generation.” The traits that characterize race are those that can be transmitted genetically from parents to children. For example, lactose intolerance affects 95 percent of Asian Americans, 65 percent of African Americans and Native Americans, and 50 percent of Hispanics, compared to only 15 percent of Americans of European ancestry.

Features of race, such as skin color, hair type and color, blood traits, and shape of body, head, and facial features, were once thought to be scientifically classifiable. Contemporary geographers reject the entire biological basis of classifying humans into a handful of races because these features are not rooted in specific places.

However, one feature of race does matter to geographers: the color of skin. The distribution of persons of color matters to geographers because it is the fundamental basis by which people in many societies sort out where they reside, attend school, spend their leisure time, and perform many other activities of daily life.

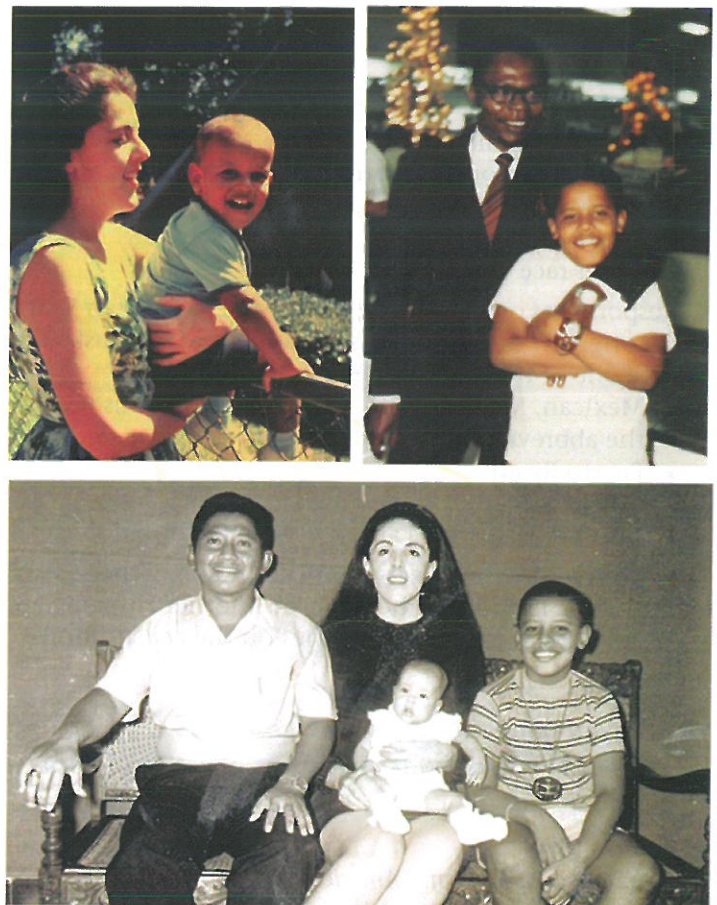
At best, biological features are so highly variable among members of a race that any prejudged classification is meaningless. Perhaps many tens or hundreds of thousands of years ago, early “humans” (however they emerged as a distinct species) lived in such isolation from other early “humans” that they were truly distinct genetically. But the degree of isolation needed to keep biological features distinct genetically vanished when the first human crossed a river or climbed a hill.

At worst, biological classification by race is the basis for **racism**, which is the belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular

race. A **racist** is a person who subscribes to the beliefs of racism.

President Barack Obama illustrates the complexity of designating race and ethnicity in the United States (Figure 7-2):

- President Obama’s father, Barack Obama, Senior, was born in the village of Kanyadhiang, Kenya. He was a member of Kenya’s third-largest ethnic group, known as the Luo.
- President Obama’s mother, Ann Dunham, was born in Kansas. Most of her ancestors migrated to the United States from England in the nineteenth century.
- President Obama’s step-father—his mother’s second husband, Lolo Soetoro—was born in the village of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. He was a member of Indonesia’s largest ethnic group, known as the Javanese.
- The son of a white mother and a black father, President Obama chose to identify himself on the census as “Black, African American, or Negro.”



▲ **FIGURE 7-2 ETHNIC DIVERSITY: BARACK OBAMA'S FAMILY** (top left) Barack Obama with his mother, (top right) with his father, and (bottom) with his stepfather, mother, and stepsister.

## Ethnicities in the United States

### Learning Outcome 7.1.1

#### Identify and describe the major ethnicities in the United States.

The United States has always been defined, in part, by its ethnic diversity. Today, Americans are more diverse than ever before. Every 10 years, the U.S. Bureau of the Census asks people to classify themselves according to the ethnicity with which they most closely identify. Americans are asked to identify themselves by answering two questions:

- Check the box next to one or more of the following fifteen categories:
  - White
  - Black, African American, or Negro
  - American Indian or Alaska Native
  - Asian Indian
  - Chinese
  - Filipino
  - Other Asian
  - Japanese
  - Korean
  - Vietnamese
  - Native Hawaiian
  - Guamanian or Chamorro
  - Samoan
  - Other Pacific Islander
  - Other race
- Respond yes or no to being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. If the response is yes, individuals are asked to pick one of these categories:
  - Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano [the census uses the abbreviation “Am.”]
  - Puerto Rican
  - Cuban
  - Another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Respondents who select American Indian, Other Asian, Other Pacific Islander, Other race, or Another Hispanic are asked to write in the specific names on the census form.

### Pause and Reflect 7.1.1

How would you answer the census questions about yourself?

*Hispanic* and *Hispanic American* are terms that the U.S. government chose in 1973 to describe the group because they are inoffensive labels that can be applied to all people from Spanish-speaking countries. Some Americans of Latin American descent have instead adopted the terms *Latino* (males) and *Latina* (females). A 1995 U.S. Census Bureau survey found that 58 percent of Americans of Latin American descent preferred the term *Hispanic* and 12 percent *Latino/Latina*.

Most Hispanics identify with a more specific ethnic or national origin. Around two-thirds come from Mexico and are sometimes called *Chicanos* (males) or *Chicanas* (females). Originally these terms were considered insulting, but in the 1960s Mexican American youths in Los Angeles began to call themselves *Chicanos* and *Chicanas* with pride.

In 2010 about 72 percent of Americans said on the census that they were white, 13 percent black or African American, 5 percent one of the seven Asian categories, 1 percent American Indian or Alaska Native, and 6 percent other. The census permits people to check more than one box, and 3 percent did that in 2010. Approximately 16 percent said they were Hispanic, and 84 percent said they were not.

The U.S. census shows the difficulty in distinguishing between ethnicity and race. Most of the census categories relate to ethnicity because they derive from places, such as African American or Asian Indian. However, the census also offers three race-related categories—black, white, and other race. The three most numerous U.S. ethnicities—Asian American, African American, and Hispanic American—further illustrate the difficulty. These three display distinct cultural traditions that originate at particular hearths but are regarded in different ways:

- *Asian American* as an ethnicity and *Asian* a race refer to the same group of people, which encompasses Americans from many countries in Asia (Figure 7-3).
- *African American* as an ethnicity and *black* as a race encompass different groups, although the 2010 census combines the two. Most black Americans are descended from African immigrants and therefore also belong to an African American ethnicity (Figure 7-4). Some American blacks, however, trace their cultural heritage to regions other than Africa, including Latin America, Asia, and Pacific islands. The term *African American* identifies a group with an extensive cultural tradition, whereas the term *black* in principle denotes nothing more than dark skin. Because many Americans make judgments about the values and behavior of others simply by observing

▼ FIGURE 7-3 ASIAN AMERICANS San Francisco's Chinatown.





▲ FIGURE 7-4 AFRICAN AMERICANS New York's Harlem.

skin color, *black* is substituted for *African American* in daily language.

- *Hispanic* is an ethnicity but not a race, so Hispanics can identify with any race they wish. Hispanics have an especially difficult time doing so on the census. In 2010, 53 percent of Hispanics picked white, 37 percent other race, 6 percent more than one box, and 4 percent one of the 13 other categories (Figure 7-5).

Today, many Americans are of mixed ancestry and may or may not choose to identify with a single race or ethnicity. Other Americans trace their heritage to places in Europe, such as Ireland and Italy, that are not included in the two race and ethnicity census questions.

## ETHNIC CLUSTERING: STATE SCALE

The distinctive distribution of African Americans and Hispanics is especially noticeable at the state level. At the state level, African Americans comprise 85 percent of the population in the city of Detroit and only 7 percent in the rest of Michigan. Otherwise stated, Detroit contains less than one-tenth of Michigan's total population but more than one-half of the state's African American population (Figure 7-6). Similarly, Chicago is more than one-third African American, compared to one-twelfth in the rest of Illinois. Chicago has less than one-fourth of Illinois' total population and more than one-half of the state's African Americans.

The distribution of Hispanics is similar to that of African Americans in large northern cities. For example, New York City is more than one-fourth Hispanic, compared to one-sixteenth in the rest of New York State, and New York City contains two-fifths of the state's total population and three-fourths of its Hispanics.

In the states with the largest Hispanic populations—California and Texas—the distribution is mixed. In California, Hispanics comprise nearly half of Los Angeles's population, but the percentage of Hispanics in California's other large cities is less than or about equal to the overall state



▲ FIGURE 7-5 HISPANICS Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood.

average. In Texas, El Paso and San Antonio—the two large cities closest to the Mexican border—are more than one-half Hispanic, but the state's other large cities have percentages below or about equal to the state's average of around one-third.



▲ FIGURE 7-6 DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNICITIES IN MICHIGAN Most of Michigan's African Americans live in Detroit.

## Distribution of Ethnicities in the United States

### Learning Outcome 7.1.2

Describe the distribution of major U.S. ethnicities among regions and within urban areas.

Within a country, clustering of ethnicities can occur on two scales. Ethnic groups may live in particular regions of the country, and they may live in particular communities within cities and states. Within the United States, ethnicities are clustered at both scales.

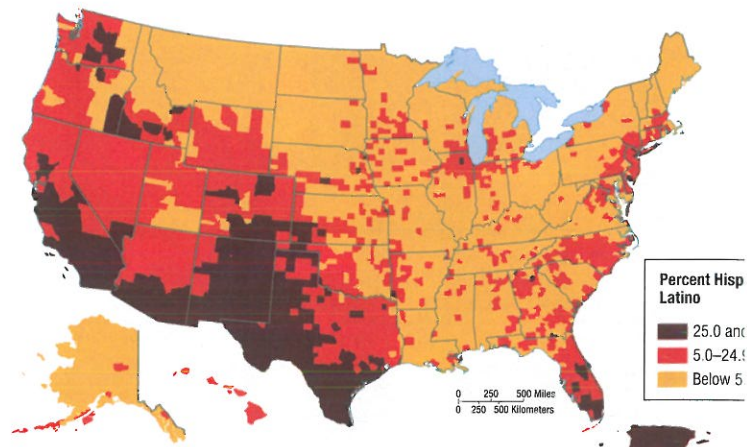
### ETHNIC CLUSTERING: REGIONAL SCALE

On a regional scale, ethnicities have distinctive distributions within the United States:

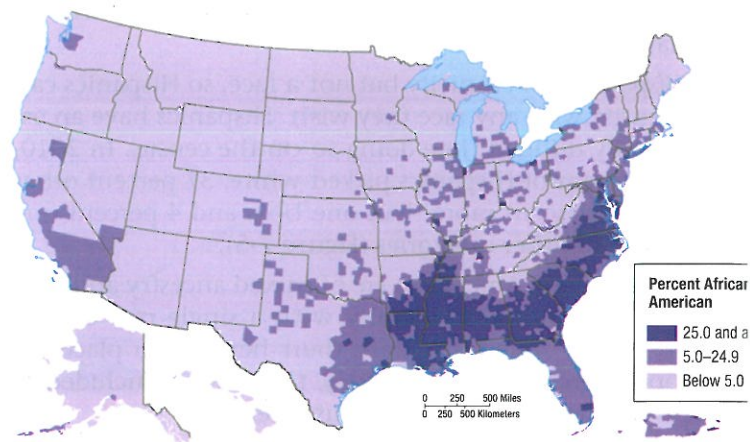
- **Hispanics.** Clustered in the Southwest, Hispanics exceed one-third of the population of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas and one-quarter of California (Figure 7-7). California is home to one-third of all Hispanics, Texas one-fifth, and Florida and New York one-sixth each.
- **African Americans.** Clustered in the Southeast, African Americans comprise at least one-fourth of the population in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, and South Carolina and more than one-third in Mississippi (Figure 7-8). Concentrations are even higher in selected counties. At the other extreme, nine states in upper New England and the West have less than 1 percent African Americans.
- **Asian Americans.** Clustered in the West, Asian Americans comprise more than 40 percent of the population of Hawaii (Figure 7-9). One-half of all Asian Americans live in California, where they comprise 12 percent of the population.

### ETHNIC CLUSTERING: URBAN SCALE

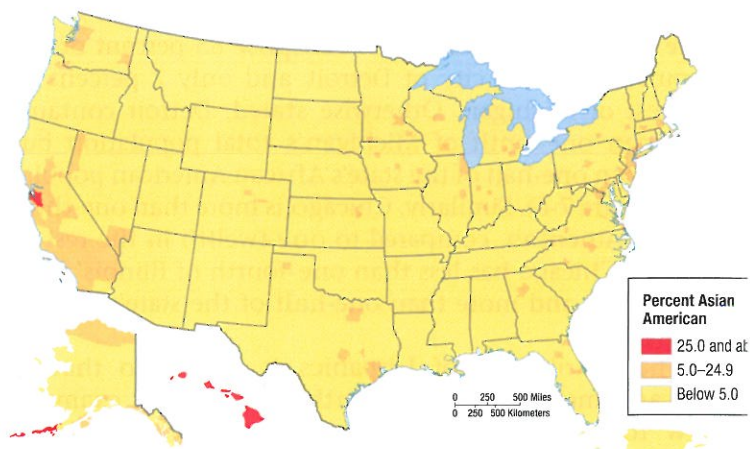
African Americans and Hispanics are highly clustered in urban areas. Around 90 percent of these ethnicities live in metropolitan areas, compared to around 75 percent for all Americans. The clustering of ethnicities is especially pronounced on the scale of neighborhoods within cities. In the early twentieth century, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, and other Midwest cities attracted ethnic groups primarily from Southern and Eastern Europe to work in the rapidly growing steel, automotive, and related industries. For example, in 1910, when Detroit's auto production was expanding, three-fourths of the city's residents were immigrants and children of immigrants. Southern and Eastern European ethnic groups clustered in newly constructed neighborhoods that were often named for their predominant ethnicities, such as Detroit's Greektown and Poletown.



▲ **FIGURE 7-7 DISTRIBUTION OF HISPANICS IN THE UNITED STATES** The counties with the highest percentages in 2010 are in the Southwest, near the Mexican border, and in northern cities.



▲ **FIGURE 7-8 DISTRIBUTION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES** The counties with the highest percentages of African Americans are in the rural South and in northern cities.



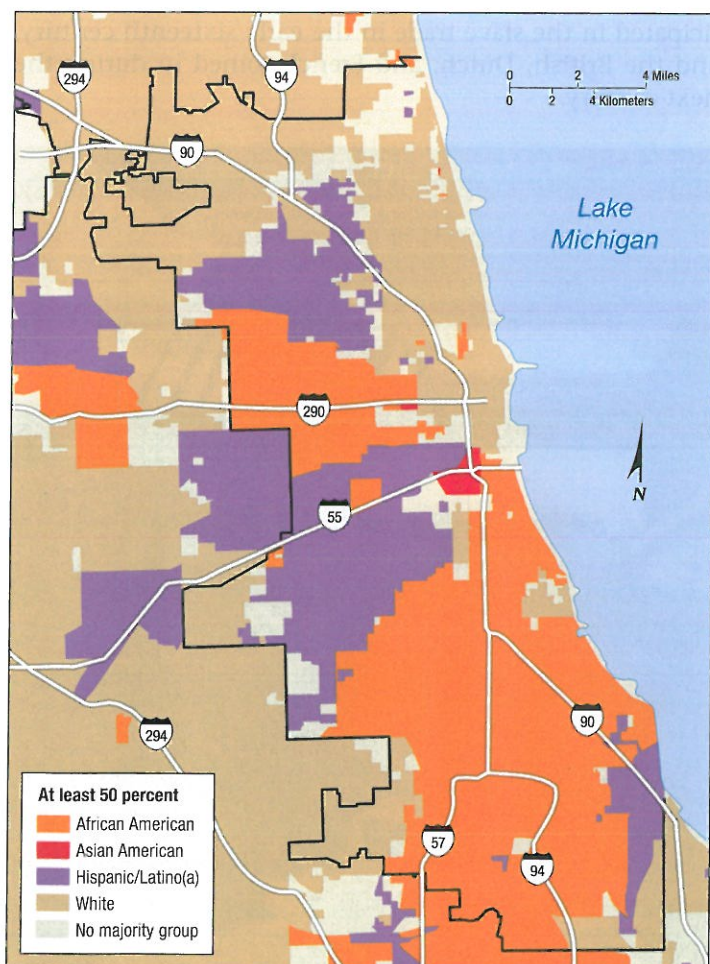
▲ **FIGURE 7-9 DISTRIBUTION OF ASIAN AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES** The counties with the highest percentages of Asian Americans are in Hawaii and California.

The children and grandchildren of European immigrants moved out of most of the original inner-city neighborhoods during the twentieth century. For descendants

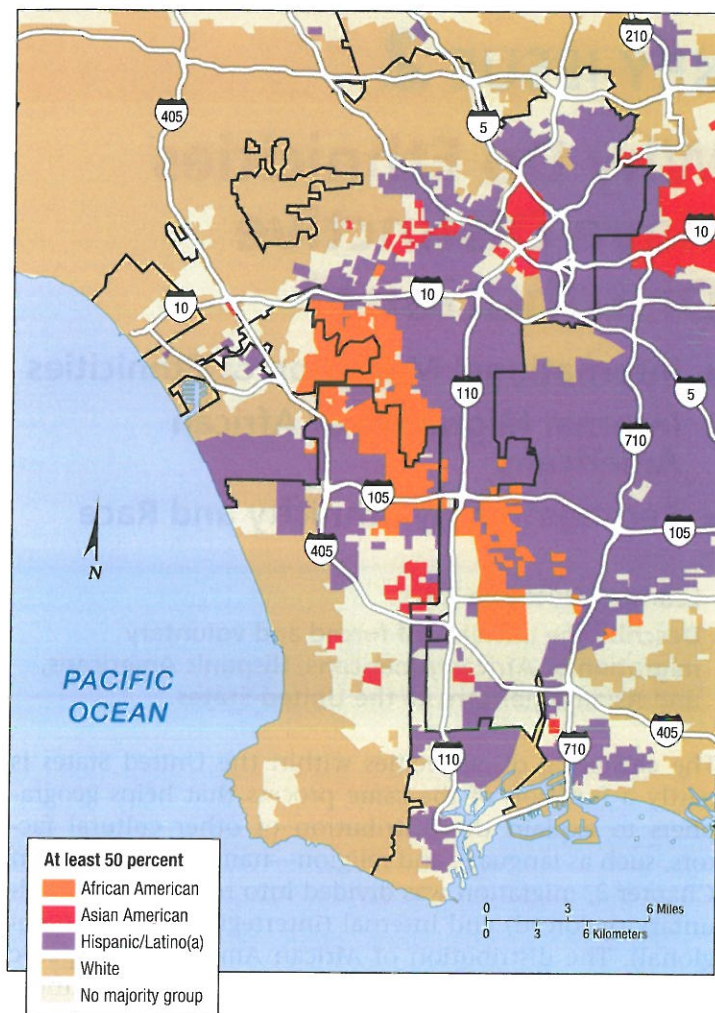
of European immigrants, ethnic identity is more likely to be retained through religion, food, and other cultural traditions than through location of residence. A visible remnant of early twentieth-century European ethnic neighborhoods is the clustering of restaurants in such areas as Little Italy and Greektown.

Ethnic concentrations in U.S. cities increasingly consist of African Americans who migrate from the South or immigrants from Latin America and Asia. In cities such as Detroit, African Americans now comprise the majority and live in neighborhoods originally inhabited by European ethnic groups. Chicago has extensive African American neighborhoods on the south and west sides of the city, but the city also contains a mix of neighborhoods inhabited by European, Latin American, and Asian ethnicities (Figure 7-10).

In Los Angeles, which contains large percentages of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans, the major ethnic groups are clustered in different areas (Figure 7-11). African Americans are located in south-central Los Angeles and Hispanics in the east. Asian Americans are located to the south and west, contiguous to the African American and Hispanic areas.



▲ **FIGURE 7-10 DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNICITIES IN CHICAGO** According to the 2010 Census, African Americans were clustered on the south and west sides, Hispanics on the northwest and southwest side, and whites on the north side.



▲ **FIGURE 7-11 DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNICITIES IN LOS ANGELES** According to the 2010 Census, African Americans were clustered to the south of downtown Los Angeles and Hispanics to the east. Asian American neighborhoods were contiguous to the African American and Hispanic areas.

### CHECK-IN: KEY ISSUE 1

#### Where Are Ethnicities Distributed?

- ✓ The most numerous ethnicities in the United States are Hispanic, African American, and Asian American.
- ✓ The three most numerous U.S. ethnicities have distinctive distributions at regional, state, and urban scales.

#### Pause and Reflect 7.1.2

Where are the principal clusters of ethnic minorities found in your community?

## KEY ISSUE 2

# Why Do Ethnicities Have Distinctive Distributions?

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

### Learning Outcome 7.2.1

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

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

## International Migration of Ethnicities

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

### FORCED MIGRATION FROM AFRICA

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

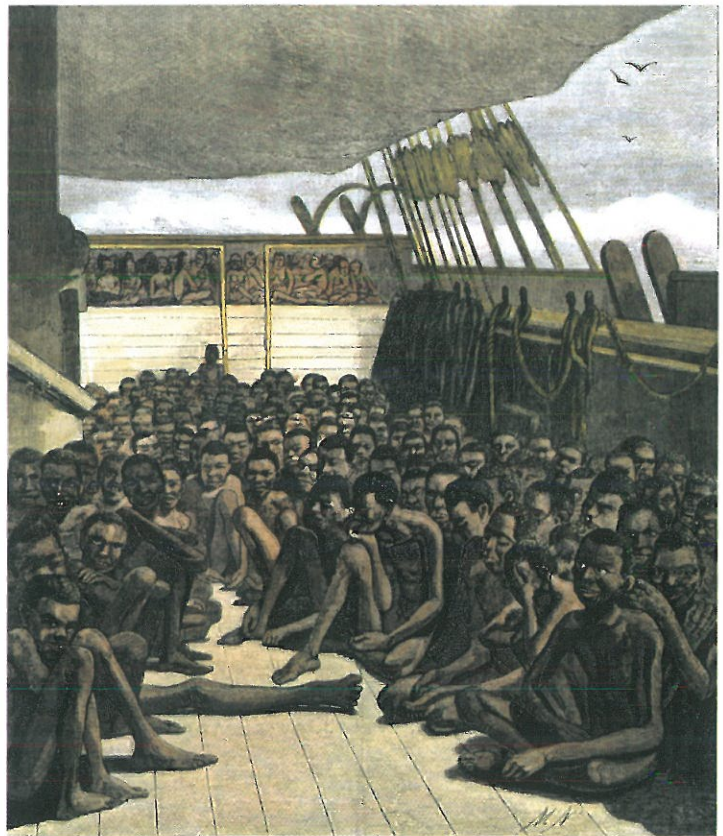
Slavery was widespread during the time of the Roman Empire, about 2,000 years ago. During the Middle Ages,

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

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

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

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



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