In Eastern Europe the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia during the 1990s gave more numerous ethnicities the opportunity to organize nation-states. But the less numerous ethnicities found themselves existing as minorities in multinational states, or divided among more than one of the new states. Especially severe problems have occurred in the Balkans, a rugged, mountainous region where nation-states could not be delineated peacefully.

With the fall of the Communist government, Bulgaria’s Turkish minority pressed for more rights, including permission to teach the Turkish language as an optional subject in school. But many Bulgarians opposed these efforts. Although communism declined in importance in Bulgaria—as well as in other former Communist countries in Eastern Europe—it was replaced by an ideology that encouraged traditional cultural features, such as language and religion.

The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia were dismantled largely because minority ethnicities opposed the long-standing dominance of the most numerous ones in each country—Russians in the Soviet Union, Serbs in Yugoslavia, and Czechs in Czechoslovakia. The dominance was pervasive, including economic, political, and cultural institutions.

No longer content to control a province or some other local government unit, ethnicities sought to be the majority in completely independent nation-states. Republics that once constituted local government units within the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia generally made peaceful transitions into independent countries—as long as their boundaries corresponded reasonably well with the territory occupied by a clearly defined ethnicity.

Slovenia is a good example of a nation-state that was carved from the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Slovenes comprise 93 percent of the population of Slovenia, and nearly all the world’s 2 million Slovenes live in Slovenia. The relatively close coincidence between the boundaries of the Slovene ethnic group and the country of Slovenia has promoted the country’s relative peace and stability, compared to other former Yugoslav republics.

For new nation-states in Eastern Europe such as Slovenia, sovereignty has brought difficulties in converting from Communist economic systems and fitting into the global economy (see Chapters 9 and 11). But their problems of economic reform are minor compared to the conflicts that have erupted in portions of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, where nation-states could not be created.

**KEY ISSUE 3**

**Why Do Ethnicities Clash?**

- Ethnic competition to dominate nationality
- Dividing ethnicities among more than one state

Ethnicities do not always find ways to live together peacefully. In some cases, ethnicities compete in civil wars to dominate the national identity. In other cases, problems result from division of ethnicities among more than one state.

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**Ethnic Competition to Dominate Nationality**

Sub-Saharan Africa has been a region especially plagued by conflicts among ethnic groups competing to become dominant within the various countries. The Horn of Africa and central Africa are the two areas within sub-Saharan Africa where conflicts among ethnic groups have been particularly complex and brutal.

**Ethnic Competition in the Horn of Africa**

The Horn of Africa encompasses the countries of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. Especially severe problems have been found in Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia, as well as in the neighboring country of Sudan.

**ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA.** Eritrea, located along the Red Sea, became an Italian colony in 1890. Ethiopia, an independent country for more than 2,000 years, was captured by Italy during the 1930s. After World War II, Ethiopia regained its independence, and the United Nations awarded Eritrea to Ethiopia (Figure 7–14).

The United Nations expected Ethiopia to permit Eritrea considerable authority to run its own affairs, but Ethiopia dissolved the Eritrean legislature and banned the use of Tigrinya, Eritrea’s major local language. The Eritreans rebelled, beginning a 30-year fight for independence (1961–1991). During this civil war, an estimated 665,000 Eritrean refugees fled to neighboring Sudan, especially north to the city of Bür Südán (Port Sudan) along the Red Sea and west to Khartoum, the capital, as well as to Kassalá, a smaller border town.

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

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

Even with the loss of Eritrea, Ethiopia remained a complex multi-ethnic state. From the late nineteenth century until the 1990s, Ethiopia was controlled by the Amharas, who are Christians. After the government defeat in the early 1990s, power passed to a combination of ethnic groups. The Oromo, who are Muslim fundamentalists from the south, are the largest ethnicity in Ethiopia, at 40 percent of the population. Tigres live in the far north, the birthplace of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The Amhara had banned the languages and cultures of these groups since conquering Ethiopia in the late nineteenth century.

**SUDAN.** In Sudan, a country of more than 40 million inhabitants, a civil war has raged since the 1980s between two ethnicities, the black Christian and animist rebels in the southern
provinces and the Arab-Muslim-dominated government forces in the north. The black southerners have been resisting government attempts to convert the country from a multi-ethnic society to one nationality tied to Muslim traditions.

The government of Sudan has adopted laws designed to segregate the sexes in public. All schools are single sex, and men are prohibited from "lurking" outside all-female schools. Barriers must be erected to separate men and women at weddings, parties, and picnics. Women are not permitted to sit near the driver on buses. Sporting events involving women must be held in private, and female players are not allowed to wear tight-fitting clothes.

Where contact between men and women is unavoidable, laws prohibit provocative behavior. Women working in restaurants may not wear jewelry or perfume. Women shopping after dark must be accompanied by a male relative. Men as well as women must wear clothing that substantially covers the body, although women are allowed to wear their traditional colorful flowing gowns called tobes and do not have to wear veils. More streetlights have been installed to prevent amorous couples from vanishing into the darkness.

More than 2 million Sudanese—5 percent of the population—died in the civil war, and another 1 million were forced to migrate from the south to the north or to Ethiopia. An accord in 2005 called for autonomy for the southern Christians and sharing of power in the national government. Many in the south, though, pushed for full independence from Sudan.

As Sudan's religion-based civil war was winding down, an ethnic war erupted in the western-most Darfur region. Resenting discrimination and neglect by the national government, Darfur's black Africans launched a rebellion in 2003. Marauding Arab nomads, known as janjaweed, with the support of the Sudanese government, crushed Darfur's black population, made up mainly of settled farmers. An estimated 450,000 have been killed and another 2.5 million have been living in dire conditions in refugee camps in the harsh desert environment of Darfur.

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

Somalia's 9 million inhabitants are divided among six major ethnic groups known as clans, each of which is divided into a large number of sub-clans. Traditionally, the six major clans occupied different portions of Somalia—Isaaq, Darod, and Dir to the north; Digil, Hawiye, and Rahanwayn to the south. A Darod sub-clan known as Mahareen ruled Somalia until 1991, when
rebels dominated by the Hawiye clan took control of southern Somalia, and the Isaak clan gained control of much of the north. A complex series of splits within clans and alliances between clans muddled the traditional geographic divisions during the 1990s. The Isaak clan declared the north a separate state of Somaliland and adopted its own flag and currency. During the colonial period the territory that the Isaaks call Somaliland had been ruled by the British, whereas the rest of Somalia was an Italian colony. The two colonies were put together into one independent country in 1960. Somaliland encompasses 20 percent of the land area and 40 percent of the people of Somalia. Other countries do not recognize Somaliland’s independence.

With the collapse of a national government in Somalia, various clans and sub-clans claimed control over portions of the country. As the armies of the individual clans and sub-clans seized food, property, and weapons, members of less powerful clans and sub-clans migrated to refugee camps to seek safety and food.

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

Islamist militias took control of much of Somalia in 2006 by overthrowing the warlords. The U.S. government had backed the warlords, because the Islamists were believed to be more sympathetic to terrorists. Somalis supported the Islamist takeover as a way to restore order in a country that had been torn apart by conflict among warlords.

**Ethnic Competition in Lebanon**

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

Lebanon’s most numerous Christian sect, accounting for about two-thirds of the country’s Christians, is Maronite, which split from the Roman Catholic Church in the seventh century. Maronites, ruled by the patriarch of Antioch, perform the liturgy in the ancient Syrian language. The second-largest Christian sect—about one-sixth of the country’s Christians—are Greek Orthodox, the Eastern Orthodox church that uses a Byzantine liturgy. The remaining one-sixth of Christian sects in Lebanon include Greek Catholic, Armenian, Syrian Orthodox (Jacobites), and Chaldeans (Assyrian).

The precise distribution of religions in Lebanon is unknown, because no census has been taken since 1932. The current estimate is about 60 percent Muslim, 30 percent Christian, and 10 percent other.

Two-thirds of Lebanon’s Muslims belong to one of several Shiite sects. The largest is Mitwali, but in recent years more militant sects have gained power, especially Hezbollah, the Party of God. Sunnis, which are much more numerous than Shiites in the world, account for only one-third of Lebanon’s Muslims.

Lebanon also has non-Christian and non-Muslim groups, most important of which is the Druze (about 7 percent of the population). The Druze religion combines elements of Islam and Christianity, but many of the rituals are kept secret from outsiders.

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

Lebanon’s religious groups have tended to live in different regions of the country (Figure 7–15). Maronites are concentrated in the west central part, Sunnis in the northwest, and Shiites in the south and east. Beirut, the capital and largest city, has been divided between an eastern Christian zone and a Muslim western zone.

When the governmental system was created, Christians constituted a majority and controlled the country’s main businesses, but as the Muslims became the majority, they demanded political and economic equality. Lebanon’s government was unable to deal with changing social and economic conditions. A civil war broke out in 1975, and each religious group formed a private army or militia to guard its territory. The territory controlled by each militia changed according to results of battles with other religious groups.

**Figure 7–15** Ethnicities in Lebanon. Christians dominate in the south and the northwest, Sunni Muslims in the far north, Shiite Muslims in the northeast and south, and Druze in the south-central and southeast.
Israel and the United States sent troops into Lebanon at various points in failed efforts to restore peace. The United States pulled out after 241 U.S. marines died in 1983 in their barracks from a truck bomb. Lebanon was left under the control of neighboring Syria, which had a historical claim over the territory until it too was forced to withdraw its troops in 2005.

**Dividing Ethnicities Among More Than One State**

Newly independent countries are often created to separate two ethnicities. However, two ethnicities can rarely be segregated completely. Conflicts arise when an ethnicity is split among more than one country (see Global Forces, Local Impacts box).

**Dividing Ethnicities in South Asia**

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

The basis for separating West and East Pakistan from India was ethnicity. The people living in the two areas of Pakistan were predominantly Muslim, whereas those in India were predominantly Hindu. Antagonism between the two religious groups was so great that the British decided to place the Hindus and Muslims in separate states.

Hinduism has become a great source of national unity in India. In modern India, with its hundreds of languages and ethnic groups, Hinduism has become the cultural trait shared by the largest percentage of the population.

Muslims have long fought with Hindus for control of territory, especially in South Asia. Around 1000, Mahmud, the Muslim king of Ghazni (modern-day Afghanistan), led raids on the Punjab area of northern India. His purpose originally was to acquire treasure from Hindu temples, but the raids turned into a Muslim–Hindu religious war. The Punjab became part of the Ghazni kingdom, with a governor at Lahore.

The fragmented Hindu kingdoms were unable to stop a second set of invasions by Muslims, who in the thirteenth century seized most of northern India as far east as Bengal. The population consisted primarily of Hindus and Buddhists, but the number of Muslims grew within a few generations as a result of intermarriage and further immigration from the west.

After the British took over India in the early 1800s, a three-way struggle began, with the Hindus and Muslims fighting each other as well as the British rulers. Muslims believed that the British discriminated more against them than against the Hindus. When the British granted independence to the region following World War II, Hindus and Muslims fought over the organization of the newly independent region. Mahatma Gandhi, the leading Hindu advocate of nonviolence and reconciliation with Muslims, was assassinated in 1948, ending the possibility of creating a single state in which Muslims and Hindus lived together peacefully.

**FORCED MIGRATION.** The partition of South Asia into two states resulted in massive migration, because the two boundaries did not correspond precisely to the territory inhabited by the two ethnicities. Approximately 17 million people caught on the wrong side of a boundary felt compelled to migrate during the late 1940s. Some 6 million Muslims moved from India to West Pakistan and about 1 million from India to East Pakistan. Hindus who migrated to India included approximately 6 million from West Pakistan and 3.5 million from East Pakistan (Figure 7-16).

As they attempted to reach the other side of the new border, Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in India were killed by people from the rival religion. Extremists attacked small groups of refugees traveling by road and halted trains to massacre the passengers.

**ETHNIC DISPUTES.** Pakistan and India never agreed on the location of the boundary separating the two countries in the northern region of Kashmir. Since 1972 the two countries have maintained a “line of control” through the region, with Pakistan administering the northwestern portion and India the southeastern portion. Muslims, who comprise a majority in both portions, have fought a guerrilla war to secure reunification of Kashmir, either as part of Pakistan or as an independent country. India blames Pakistan for the unrest and vows to retain its portion of Kashmir. Pakistan argues that Kashmiris on both sides of the border should choose their own future in a vote, confident that the majority Muslim population would break away from India (Figure 7-17).

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

**Dividing Sri Lanka Among Ethnicities**

Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), an island country of 20 million inhabitants off the Indian coast, has been torn by fighting between the Sinhalese and the Tamils (Figure 7-18). Since fighting began in 1983, 60,000 have died in the conflict between the two ethnicities.
Dividing Ethnicities Among More Than One State

**Figure 7-16** Ethnic division of South Asia. In 1947 British India was partitioned into two independent states, India and Pakistan, which resulted in the migration of an estimated 17 million people. The creation of Pakistan as two territories nearly 1,600 kilometers (1,000 miles) apart proved unstable, and in 1971 East Pakistan became the independent country of Bangladesh. In the photo at right, the train station in Amritsar, India, October 17, 1947, is crowded with Hindus who have been brought from Pakistan.

**Figure 7-17** Kashmir, India, and Pakistan dispute the location of their border. India claims Kashmir, in northernmost Pakistan, and India accuses Pakistan of encouraging unrest in India’s state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the majority is Muslim.

**Figure 7-18** Sinhalese and Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Sinhalese are Buddhists who speak an Indo-European language, whereas the Tamils are Hindus who speak a Dravidian language. The striped areas show where the two groups intermingle.
GLOBAL FORCES, LOCAL IMPACTS
Dividing the Kurds

An example of an ethnicity divided among several states is the Kurds, who live in the Caucasus south of the Armenians and Azeris. The Kurds are Sunni Muslims who speak a language in the Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European and have distinctive literature, dress, and other cultural traditions.

Kurds lived in an independent nation-state called Kurdistan during the 1920s, but today 30 million Kurds are split among several countries. Fourteen million live in eastern Turkey, 6 million in western Iran, 5 million in northern Iraq, 2 million in Syria, and the rest in other countries (refer to Figure 7–13). Kurds comprise one-fourth of the population in Turkey, one-fifth in Iraq, and one-tenth in Iran.

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

To foster the development of Turkish nationalism, the Turks have tried repeatedly to suppress Kurdish culture. Use of the Kurdish language was illegal in Turkey until 1991, and laws banning its use in broadcasts and classrooms remain in force. Kurdish nationalists, for their part, have waged a guerrilla war since 1984 against the Turkish army.

Kurds in other countries have fared just as poorly as those in Turkey. Iran’s Kurds secured an independent republic in 1946, but it lasted less than a year. Iraq’s Kurds have made several unsuccessful attempts to gain independence, including in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1970s. A few days after Iraq was defeated in the 1991 Gulf War, the country’s Kurds launched another unsuccessful rebellion. The United States and its allies decided not to resume their recently concluded fight against Iraq on behalf of the Kurdish rebels, but after the revolt was crushed, they sent troops to protect the Kurds from further attacks by the Iraqi army. After the United States attacked Iraq and deposed Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iraqi Kurds achieved even more autonomy, but still not independence.

Thus, despite their numbers, the Kurds are an ethnicity with no corresponding Kurdish state today. Instead, they are forced to live under the control of the region’s more powerful nationalities.

![Kurdish refugees, escaping from attacks by Saddam Hussein’s army during the 1991 war in Iraq, cross the Hizel River from Iraq into Turkey.](image)

Sinhalese, who comprise 74 percent of Sri Lanka’s population, migrated from northern India in the fifth century B.C., occupying the southern portion of the island. Three hundred years later the Sinhalese were converted to Buddhism, and Sri Lanka became one of that religion’s world centers. Sinhalese is an Indo-European language, in the Indo-Iranian branch.

Tamils—18 percent of Sri Lanka’s population—migrated across the narrow 80-kilometer-wide (50-miles-wide) Palk Strait from India beginning in the third century B.C. and occupied the northern part of the island. Tamils are Hindus, and the Tamil language, in the Dravidian family, is also spoken by 60 million people in India.
The dispute between Sri Lanka’s two ethnicities extends back more than 2,000 years but was suppressed during 300 years of European control. Since independence in 1948, Sinhalese have dominated the government military, and most of the commerce. Tamils feel that they suffer from discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese-dominated government and have received support for a rebellion that began in 1983 from Tamils living in other countries. A Tamil assassinated the Sinhalese president in 1993 and wounded his successor in 1999. A ceasefire was declared in 2002, but has been violated frequently by both sides.

KEY ISSUE 4
What Is Ethnic Cleansing?

- Ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia
- Ethnic cleansing in Central Africa

Throughout history, ethnic groups have been forced to flee from other ethnic groups’ more powerful armies. The largest level of forced migration came during World War II (1939–1945) because of events leading up to the war, the war itself, and postwar adjustments. Especially notorious was the deportation by the German Nazis of millions of Jews, gypsies, and other ethnic groups to the infamous concentration camps, where they exterminated most of them.

After World War II ended, millions of ethnic Germans, Poles, Russians, and other groups were forced to migrate as a result of boundary changes (Figure 7–19). For example, when a portion of eastern Germany became part of Poland, the Germans living in the region were forced to move west to Germany, and Poles were allowed to move into the area. Similarly, Poles were forced to move when the eastern portion of Poland was turned over to the Soviet Union.

**Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia**

The scale of forced migration during World War II has not been repeated, but in the 1990s a new term—“ethnic cleansing”—was invented to describe new practices by ethnic groups against other ethnic groups. Ethnic cleansing is a process in which a more powerful ethnic group forcibly removes a less powerful one in order to create an ethnically homogeneous region. The point of ethnic cleansing is not simply to defeat an enemy or to subjugate them, as was the case in traditional wars.

Ethnic cleansing is undertaken to rid an area of an entire ethnicity so that the surviving ethnic group can be the sole inhabitants. Rather than a clash between armies of male soldiers, ethnic cleansing involves the removal of every member of the less powerful ethnicity—women as well as men, children as well as adults, the frail elderly as well as the strong youth. Ethnic cleansing has been especially prominent in

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**FIGURE 7–19** Forced migration of ethnicities as a result of territorial changes after World War II. The largest number were Poles forced to move from territory occupied by the Soviet Union, Germans forced to migrate from territory taken over by Poland and the Soviet Union, and Russians forced to return to the Soviet Union from Western Europe.
portions of former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

Ethnic cleansing in former Yugoslavia is part of a complex pattern of ethnic diversity in the region of southeastern Europe known as the Balkan Peninsula. The region, about the size of Texas, is named for the Balkan Mountains (known in Slavic languages as Stara Planina), which extend east–west across the region. The Balkans includes Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania, as well as several countries that once comprised Yugoslavia (Figure 7–20).

Creation of Multi-Ethnic Yugoslavia

The Balkan Peninsula has long been a hotbed of unrest, a complex assemblage of ethnicities. Northern portions were incorporated into the Austria-Hungary Empire, whereas southern portions were ruled by the Ottomans. Austria-Hungary extended its rule farther south in 1878 to include Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the majority of the people had been converted to Islam by the Ottomans. In June 1914 the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serb who sought independence for Bosnia. The incident sparked World War I.

After World War I the allies created a new country, Yugoslavia, to unite several Balkan ethnicities that spoke similar South Slavic languages (Figure 7–21). The most numerous ethnicities brought into Yugoslavia were Serbs and Croats; others included Slovenes, Macedonians, and Montenegrins. The prefix “Yugo” in the country’s name derives from the Slavic word for “south.”

ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA.

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

- Yugoslavia’s seven neighbors included three longtime democracies (Austria, Greece, and Italy) and four states then governed by Communists (Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania). The diversity of neighbors reflected Yugoslavia’s strategic location between the Western democracies and Communist Eastern Europe. Although a socialist country, Yugoslavia was militarily neutral after it had been expelled in 1948 from the Soviet-dominated military alliance for being too independent minded. Yugoslavia’s Communists permitted more communication and interaction with Western democracies than did other Eastern European countries.
- The six republics—Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia—had more autonomy from the national government to run their own affairs than was the case in other Eastern European countries.
- Five of the republics were named for the country’s five recognized nationalities—Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes. Bosnia & Herzegovina contained a mix of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims.
- Yugoslavia had four official languages—Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Slovene. (Montenegrins spoke Serbian.)
- The three major religions included Roman Catholic in the north, Eastern Orthodox in the east, and Islam in the south. Croats and Slovenes were predominantly Roman Catholic, Serbs and Macedonians predominantly Eastern Orthodox, and the Bosnians and Montenegrins predominantly Muslim.
- Two of the four official languages—Croatian and Slovene—were written in the Roman alphabet, whereas Macedonian and Serbian were written in Cyrillic. Most linguists outside Yugoslavia considered Serbian and Croatian to be the same language except for different alphabets.
- The refrain concluded that Yugoslavia had one dinar, the national unit of currency. Despite cultural diversity, according to the refrain, common economic interests kept Yugoslavia’s nationalities unified.

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

**Destruction of Multi-Ethnic Yugoslavia**

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

As long as Yugoslavia comprised one country, ethnic groups were not especially troubled by the division of the country into six republics. But when Yugoslavia’s republics were transformed from local government units into five separate countries, ethnicities fought to redefine the boundaries (Figure 7–22). Not only did the boundaries of Yugoslavia’s six republics fail to match the territory occupied by the five major nationalities, but the country contained other important ethnic groups that had not received official recognition as nationalities.

**ETHNIC CLEANSING IN BOSNIA.** The creation of a viable country proved especially difficult in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Yugoslavia’s five officially recognized nationalities—Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs, and Slovenes—were all able to constitute majorities in five independent countries carved out of Yugoslavia. But at the time of Yugoslavia’s breakup, the largest group in Bosnia & Herzegovina—Bosnian Muslim—was considered an ethnicity rather than a nationality. The population of Bosnia & Herzegovina consisted of 46 percent Bosnian Muslim, 37 percent Serb, and 14 percent Croat.
Yugoslavia, until its breakup in 1992. Yugoslavia comprised six republics (plus Kosovo and Vojvodina, autonomous regions within the Republic of Serbia). According to the country's last census, taken in 1981, the territory occupied by the various nationalities did not match the boundaries of the republics or autonomous regions.

Rather than live in an independent multi-ethnic country with a Muslim plurality, Bosnia & Herzegovina's Serbs and Croats fought to unite the portions of the republic that they inhabited with Serbia and Croatia, respectively. To strengthen their cases for breaking away from Bosnia & Herzegovina, Serbs and Croats engaged in ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims. Ethnic cleansing ensured that areas did not merely have majorities of Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats but were ethnically homogeneous and therefore better candidates for union with Serbia and Croatia.

Ethnic cleansing by Bosnian Serbs against Bosnian Muslims was especially severe, because much of the territory inhabited by Bosnian Serbs was separated from Serbia by areas with Bosnian Muslim majorities. By ethnically cleansing Bosnian Muslims from intervening areas, Bosnian Serbs created one continuous area of Bosnian Serb domination rather than several discontinuous ones.

Accords reached in Dayton, Ohio, in 1996 by leaders of the various ethnicities divided Bosnia & Herzegovina into three regions, one each dominated, respectively, by the Bosnian Croats, Muslims, and Serbs. The Bosnian Croat and Muslim regions were combined into a federation, with some cooperation between the two groups, but the Serb region has operated with almost complete independence in all but name from the others.

In recognition of the success of their ethnic cleansing, Bosnian Serbs received nearly half of the country, although they comprised one-third of the population, and Bosnian Croats got one-fourth of the land, although they comprised one-sixth of the population. Bosnian Muslims, one-half of the population before the ethnic cleansing, got one-fourth of the land.

**ETHNIC CLEANSING IN KOSOVO.** After the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia remained a multi-ethnic country. Particularly troubling was the province of Kosovo, where ethnic Albanians comprised 90 percent of the population.

Serbia had a historical claim to Kosovo, having controlled it between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries. Serbs fought an important—though losing—battle in Kosovo against the Ottoman Empire in 1389. In recognition of its role in forming the Serb ethnicity, Serbia was given control of Kosovo when Yugoslavia was created in the early twentieth century.

Under Tito, ethnic Albanians in Kosovo received administrative autonomy and national identity. As most Serbs emigrated from Kosovo north into Serbia, the percentage of Albanians in Kosovo increased from one-half in 1946 to three-fourths at the time of Yugoslavia's last formal census in 1981.

With the breakup of Yugoslavia, Serbia took direct control of Kosovo and launched a campaign of ethnic cleansing of the Albanian majority. At its peak in 1999, Serb ethnic cleansing had forced 750,000 of Kosovo's 2 million ethnic Albanian residents from their homes, mostly to camps in Albania.
Outraged by the ethnic cleansing, the United States and Western European countries, operating through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), launched an air attack against Serbia. The bombing campaign ended when Serbia agreed to withdraw all of its soldiers and police from Kosovo. NATO sent in 50,000 troops to protect the Albanians, nearly all of whom returned home. The United Nations took on formal responsibility for administering Kosovo and has sponsored peace talks to resolve the future of the province.

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

After two world wars and the rise and fall of communism during the twentieth century, the Balkans have once again become Balkanized in the twenty-first century. Will the United States, Western Europe, and Russia once again be drawn reluctantly into conflict through entangled alliances in the Balkans?

If peace comes to the Balkans, it will be because in a tragic way ethnic cleansing “worked.” Millions of people were rounded up and killed or forced to migrate because they constituted ethnic minorities. Ethnic homogeneity may be the price of peace in areas that once were multi-ethnic.

**Ethnic Cleansing in Central Africa**

Long-standing conflicts between two ethnic groups, the Hutus and Tutsis, lie at the heart of a series of wars in central Africa. The Hutus were settled farmers, growing crops in the
CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIC TOOLS
Documenting Ethnic Cleansing

Early reports of ethnic cleansing by Serbs in former Yugoslavia were so shocking that many people dismissed them as journalistic exaggeration or partisan propaganda. It took one of geography’s most important analytic tools, aerial-photography interpretation, to provide irrefutable evidence of the process, as well as the magnitude, of ethnic cleansing.

The process of ethnic cleansing involved four steps. A series of three photographs taken by NATO air reconnaissance over the village of Glodane, in western Kosovo, illustrated the four steps. The first step was to move a large amount of military equipment and personnel into a village with no strategic value. Figure 7-1.1 shows the village’s houses and farm buildings clustered on the left side, with fields on the outskirts of the village, including the center and right portions of the photograph. As discussed in Chapter 12, in rural settlements in most of the world, houses and farm buildings are clustered together and surrounded by fields rather than being arranged in the pattern of isolated, individual farms typical of North America. The red circles in Figure 7-1.1 show the location of Serb armored vehicles along the main street of the village.

The second step in ethnic cleansing was to round up all the people in the village. In Bosnia, Serbs often segregated men from women, children, and old people. The men were either placed in detention camps or “disappeared”—undoubtedly killed—whereas the others were forced to leave the village. In Kosovo, men were herded together with the others rather than killed. In the photograph of Glodane, the farm field immediately to the east of the main north–south road is filled with the villagers. At the scale that the photograph is reproduced in this book, the people appear as a dark mass. The white rectangles to the north of the people are civilian cars and trucks.

The third step in ethnic cleansing was to force the people to leave the village. This step appeared dramatically in the second photograph of the sequence, depicting the same location a short time later. The second photograph showed one major change: the people and vehicles massed in the field in the first photograph were gone—no people and no vehicles. The villagers were forced into a convoy—some in the vehicles, others on foot—heading for the Albanian border 16 kilometers (10 miles) to the west.

The fourth step in ethnic cleansing was to destroy the vacated village. The third photograph of the sequence showed that the buildings in the village had been set on fire.

Aerial photographs such as these not only “proved” that ethnic cleansing was occurring but also provided critical evidence to prosecute Serb leaders for war crimes.

FIGURE 7-1.1 Ethnic cleansing by Serbs forced Albanians living in Kosovo to flee in 1999.

fertile hills and valleys of present-day Rwanda and Burundi, known as the Great Lakes region of central Africa. The Tutsi were cattle herders who migrated to present-day Rwanda and Burundi from the Rift Valley of western Kenya beginning 400 years ago. Relations between settled farmers and herders are often uneasy—this is also an element of the ethnic cleansing in Darfur described earlier in the chapter. The Tutsi took control of the kingdom of Rwanda and turned the Hutu into their serfs, although Tutsi comprised only about 15 percent of the population.

Rwanda, as well as Burundi, became a colony of Germany in 1899, and after the Germans were defeated in World War I, the League of Nations gave a mandate over the two small colonies to Belgium. Under German and Belgian control, differences between the two ethnicities were reinforced. Colonial administrators permitted a few Tutsis to attend university and hold responsible government positions, while excluding the Hutu altogether.

Shortly before Rwanda gained its independence in 1962, Hutus killed or ethnically cleansed most of the Tutsis out of fear
that the Tutsis would seize control of the newly independent country. Those fears were realized in 1994 after the airplane carrying the presidents of Central Africa and Burundi back from peace talks was shot down, probably by a Tutsi. Children of the ethnically cleansed Tutsis, most of whom lived in neighboring Uganda, poured back into Rwanda, defeated the Hutu army, and killed a half-million Hutus, while suffering a half-million casualties of their own. Through ethnic cleansing, 3 million of the country's 7 million Hutus fled to Zaire, Tanzania, Uganda, and Burundi.

The conflict between Hutus and Tutsis spilled into neighboring countries of central Africa, especially the Democratic Republic of Congo, with 2.3 million square kilometers (900,000 square miles) and 62 million inhabitants in the region's largest and most populous country. The Congo is thought to have had the world's deadliest war since the end of World War II in 1945.

Tutsis were instrumental in the successful overthrow of the Congo's longtime president, Joseph Mobutu, in 1997, replacing him with Laurent Kabila. But Tutsis soon split with Kabila and led a rebellion that gained control of the eastern half of the Congo.

The Belgian Congo, as it was known until independence from Belgium in 1960, was a major world producer of copper, diamonds, gold, and other valuable minerals. Under Mobutu's leadership between 1965 and 1997, European influence in the Congo was reduced. The name of the country was changed to Zaire, and cities and families were required to switch from European to African names as well. Mobutu amassed a several-billion-dollar personal fortune from the sale of minerals while impoverishing the rest of the country.

Rebel groups in Zaire tried for years to overthrow Mobutu without success until Tutsi-controlled Rwanda joined with them. Tutsis supported the rebellion against Mobutu because they hoped to see an end to attacks launched by Hutu rebels based in eastern Zaire. Further, Mobutu had ordered the Zaire army to expel Tutsis who had lived in the eastern portion of Zaire for 200 years.

After succeeding Mobutu as president in 1997, Kabila relied heavily on Tutsis and permitted them to kill some of the Hutus who had been responsible for atrocities against Tutsis back in the early 1990s. But Kabila soon split with the Tutsis, and the Tutsis once again found themselves offering support to rebels seeking to overthrow Congo's government. Kabila turned for support to Hutus, as well as to Mayi Mayi, another ethnic group in the Congo that also hated Tutsis. Armies from Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and other neighboring countries came to Kabila's aid. Kabila was assassinated in 2001 and succeeded by his son, who negotiated an accord with rebels the following year.

**SUMMARY**

Two major museums standing one block apart in Detroit illustrate the challenges of encouraging respect for different ethnic identities in the United States. One of the museums, the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), contains a major collection of paintings by medieval European artists, many of which were donated a century ago by rich Detroit industrialists. The DIA's most famous work is an enormous mural completed in 1932 by the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, glorifying workers in Detroit's auto factories. The 80-year-old building, the country's fifth-largest art museum, looks like a Greek temple.

The nearby Museum of African American History houses the nation's largest exhibit devoted to the history and culture of African Americans. Founded in 1965, the museum has moved twice to larger buildings, including the current one opened in 1997. The building is designed to reflect the cultural heritage of Africa, including an entry with large bronze doors topped by 14-carat gold-plate decorative masks. The exhibits are primarily photographs, videos, and text.

The financially strapped city of Detroit has had difficulty adequately funding both museums, so it has had to make choices. Which museum should take priority—a crumbling temple of European masterpieces or an emotionally powerful testimony to the rich cultural traditions of America's most numerous ethnic minority? Does it matter that Detroit's African American population was 5 percent when the DIA was built and 75 percent when the Museum of African American history was built?

Here again are the key issues for Chapter 7:

1. **Where are ethnicities distributed?** Major ethnicities in the United States include African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans. These ethnic groups are clustered in regions of the country and within urban neighborhoods. In the United States, race and ethnicity are often used interchangeably, because members of the African American ethnic group are also distinguished as members of the black race (although not all blacks are African Americans).

2. **Why have ethnicities been transformed into nationalities?** Nationalities are ethnic groups that possess among their cultural traditions the attachment and loyalty to a particular country. A nationality combines an ethnic group's language, religion, and artistic expressions with a country's particular independence movement, history, and other patriotic events. During the past two centuries, many countries have been created that attempt to transform single ethnic groups into single nationalities.

3. **Why do ethnicities clash?** Conflicts can arise when a country contains several ethnicities competing with each other for control or dominance. Conflicts also arise when an ethnicity is divided among more than one country.

4. **What is ethnic cleansing?** Ethnic cleansing is an attempt by a more powerful ethnic group to create an ethnically homogeneous region by forcibly evicting all members of another ethnic group. The practice has been especially widespread in the countries that comprise the former country of Yugoslavia.
CASE STUDY REVISITED

Ethnic Cleansing in Central Africa

Line up five Hutus and five Tutsis, and the ethnic origin of perhaps half would be plain. The two ethnicities speak the same language, hold similar beliefs, and practice similar social customs, and intermarriage has lessened the physical differences between the two. Yet Hutus and Tutsis have engaged in ethnic cleansing on a scale greater than even in the former Yugoslavia.

Conflict is widespread in Africa largely because the present-day boundaries of states were drawn by European colonial powers about a hundred years ago without regard for the traditional distribution of ethnicities (Figure 7-23). European exploration of the African coast began in the 1400s, but until the late nineteenth century, Africa was largely free of foreign control.

**FIGURE 7-23** Ethnicities in Africa. The boundaries of modern African states do not match the territories long occupied by thousands of ethnic groups. State boundaries derive from the administrative units imposed by European colonial powers a century ago.
Between the 1880s and the outbreak of World War I in 1914, European countries carved up the continent into a collection of colonies. The shapes of these colonies were dictated primarily by competition among the European colonial powers to control resources in the interior rather than the distribution of ethnicities.

When the European colonies in Africa became independent states, especially during the 1950s and 1960s, the boundaries of the new states typically matched the colonial administrative units imposed by the Europeans. As a result, most African states contained large numbers of ethnicities. For example, the British colony of the Gold Coast became the independent state of Ghana in 1956. Ghana's territory includes the historic homelands of the Ashanti, Fanti, Mole-Dagbani, Ewe, and Ga-Adangme tribes.

Sub-Saharan Africa has some tradition of state control, especially in West Africa. Important states in West Africa, based in present-day Mali and Mauritania, included Ghana (800 kilometers northwest of the present-day state of Ghana) between the eighth and twelfth centuries, Mali between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, and Songhai during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Other kingdoms were located closer to the coast of West Africa. The Kongo kingdom, based near the mouth of the Congo (Zaire) River in present-day Angola and Zaire, flourished from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries. A group of Ewe-speaking people called the Aja established the Great Ardra kingdom in present-day Benin, which reached its height in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Aja mixed with other local groups to form the Fon or Dahomey ethnic group. Four hundred kilometers (250 miles) west, the Ashanti ethnic group established a confederation in the seventeenth century in the central part of present-day Ghana, which survived until the late nineteenth century.

Traditionally, though, the most important unit of African society was the tribe rather than independent states with political and economic self-determination. Africa contains several thousand ethnicities (usually referred to as tribes) with a common sense of language, religion, and social customs (refer to Figure 5–14 for a map of African languages).

The precise number of tribes is impossible to determine, because boundaries separating them are not usually defined clearly. Further, it is hard to determine whether a particular group forms a distinct tribe or is part of a larger collection of similar groups.

Some tribes are divided among more than one modern state, whereas others have been grouped with dissimilar tribes. The lack of correspondence between traditional tribes and modern states lies at the heart of the ethnic unrest in sub-Saharan Africa.

**KEY TERMS**

Apartheid (p. 228)  
Balkanization (p. 247)  
Balkanized (p. 247)  
Blockbusting (p. 228)  
Centripetal force (p. 232)  
Ethnic cleansing (p. 243)  
Ethnicity (p. 220)  
Multi-ethnic state (p. 232)  
Multinational state (p. 232)  
Nationalism (p. 231)  
Nationality (p. 230)  
Nation-state (p. 231)  
Race (p. 220)  
Racism (p. 227)  
Racist (p. 227)  
Self-determination (p. 231)  
Sharecropper (p. 225)  
Triangular slave trade (p. 224)

**THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY**

1. The 2000 U.S. Census permitted people to identify themselves as being of more than one race, in recognition that several million American children have parents of two races. Discuss the merits and difficulties of permitting people to choose more than one race.

2. Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia & Herzegovina, once contained concentrations of many ethnic groups. In retaliation for ethnic cleansing by the Serbs and Croats, the Bosnian Muslims now in control of Sarajevo have been forcing other ethnic groups to leave the city, and Sarajevo is now inhabited overwhelmingly by Bosnian Muslims. Discuss the merits and obstacles in restoring Sarajevo as a multi-ethnic city.

3. Despite the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision that racially segregated school systems are inherently unequal, most schools remain segregated, with virtually none or virtually all African American or Hispanic pupils. As long as most neighborhoods are segregated, how can racial integration in the schools be achieved?

4. A century ago European immigrants to the United States had much stronger ethnic ties than today, including clustering in specific neighborhoods. Discuss the merits and disadvantages of retaining strong ethnic identity in the United States as opposed to full assimilation into the American nationality identity.

5. With the removal of the apartheid laws, South Africa now offers legal equality to all races in principle. Discuss obstacles that South Africa’s blacks face in achieving cultural and economic equality.


