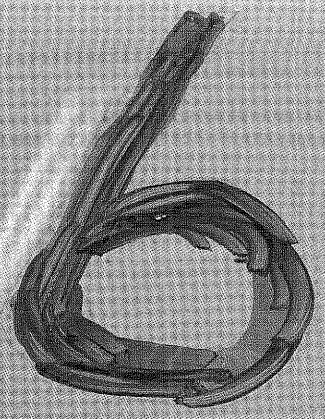
Religion



And He shall judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;
And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks:
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2:4

This passage from the Bible, the holiest book of Christianity and Judaism, is one of the most eloquent pleas for peace among the nations of the world. For many religious people, especially in the Western Hemisphere and Europe, Isaiah evokes a highly attractive image of the ideal future landscape.

Islam's holiest book, the Quran (sometimes spelled Koran), also evokes powerful images of a peaceful landscape:

He it is who sends down water from the sky, whence ye have drink, and whence the trees grow whereby ye feed your flocks.
He makes the corn to grow, and the olives, and the palms, and the grapes, and some of every fruit; verily, in that is a sign unto a people who reflect.

Sûrah (Chapter) of the Bee XVI.9

Most religious people pray for peace, but religious groups may not share the same vision of how peace will be achieved. Geographers see that the process by which one religion diffuses across the landscape may conflict with the distribution of others. Geographers are concerned with the regional distribution of different religions and the resulting potential for conflict.

Geographers also observe that religions are derived in part from elements of the physical environment, and that religions, in turn, modify the landscape. As evidence of this, note the rich agricultural images in the passages just quoted from the Bible and the Quran.

KEY ISSUES

1. **Where are religions distributed?**
2. **Why do religions have different distributions?**
3. **Why do religions organize space in distinctive patterns?**
4. **Why do territorial conflicts arise among religious groups?**

CASE STUDY

The Dalai Lama Versus the People's Republic of China

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, is as important to that religion as the Pope is to Roman Catholics. Traditionally, the Dalai Lama—which translates as *oceanic teacher*—was not only the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism but also the head of the government of Tibet. The first photograph of this chapter shows the Dalai Lama's former palace in Tibet's capital Lhasa, situated in the Himalaya Mountains.

China, which had ruled Tibet from 1720 until its independence, in 1911, invaded the rugged, isolated country in 1950, turned it into a province named Xizang in 1951, and installed a Communist government in Tibet in 1953. After crushing a rebellion in 1959, China executed or imprisoned tens of thousands and forced another 100,000, including the Dalai Lama, to emigrate. Buddhist temples were closed and demolished, and religious artifacts and scriptures were destroyed.

Why did the Chinese try to dismantle the religious institutions of a poor, remote country? At issue was the fact that the presence of strong religious feelings among the Tibetan people conflicted with the aims of the Chinese government. The conflict between traditional Buddhism and the Chinese government is one of many examples of the impact of religion. However, in the modern world of global economics and culture, local religious belief continues to play a strong role in people's lives.

Religion interests geographers because it is essential for understanding how humans occupy Earth. As always, human geographers start by asking *where* and *why*. The predominant religion varies among ***regions*** of the world, as well as among regions within North America. Geographers document the places ***where*** various religions are located in the world and offer explanations for why some religions have widespread distributions, whereas others are highly clustered in particular ***places***.

To understand ***why*** some religions occupy more ***space*** than others, geographers must look at differences among practices of various faiths. Geographers, though, are not theologians, so they stay focused on those elements of religions that are geographically significant. Geographers study spatial ***connections*** in religion: the distinctive place of origin of religions, the extent of diffusion of religions from their places of origin, the processes by which religions diffused to other locations, and the religious practices and beliefs that lead some religions to have more widespread distributions.

Geographers find the tension in ***scale*** between ***globalization*** and ***local diversity*** especially acute in religion for a number of reasons:

- People care deeply about their religion and draw from religion their core values and beliefs, an essential element of the definition of culture.
- Some religions are actually *designed* to appeal to people throughout the world, whereas other religions are designed to appeal primarily to people in geographically limited areas.
- Religious values are important in understanding not only how people identify themselves, as was the case with language, but also the meaningful ways that they organize the landscape.
- Most (though not all) religions require exclusive adherence, so adopting a global religion usually requires turning away from a traditional local religion, whereas people can learn a globally important language such as English and at the same time still speak the language of their local culture.
- Like language, migrants take their religion with them to new locations, but although migrants typically learn the language of the new location, they retain their religion.

This chapter starts by describing the distribution of major religions, then in the second section explains why some religions have diffused widely, whereas others have not. As a major facet of culture, religion leaves a strong imprint on the physical environment, discussed in the third section of the chapter. Religion, like other cultural characteristics, can be a source of pride and a means of identification with a distinct culture. Unfortunately, intense identification with one religion can lead adherents into conflict with followers of other religions, discussed in the fourth key issue of the chapter.

KEY ISSUE 1

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Universalizing religions
- Ethnic religions

Only a few religions can claim the adherence of large numbers of people. Each of these faiths has a distinctive distribution across Earth's surface (Figure 6–1).

Geographers distinguish two types of religions: universalizing and ethnic. **Universalizing religions** attempt to be global, to appeal to all people, wherever they may live in the world, not just to those of one culture or location. An **ethnic religion** appeals primarily to one group of people living in one place. About 60 percent of the world's population adhere to a universalizing religion, 25 percent to an ethnic religion, and 15 percent to no religion. This section examines the world's three main universalizing religions and some representative ethnic religions.

Universalizing Religions

The three main universalizing religions are Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Each of the three is divided into branches, denominations, and sects. A **branch** is a large and fundamental division within a religion. A **denomination** is a division of a branch that unites a number of local congregations in a single legal and administrative body. A **sect** is a relatively small group that has broken away from an established denomination.

Christianity

Christianity has about 2 billion adherents, far more than any other world religion, and has the most widespread distribution. It is the predominant religion in North America, South America, Europe, and Australia, and countries with a Christian majority exist in Africa and Asia as well.

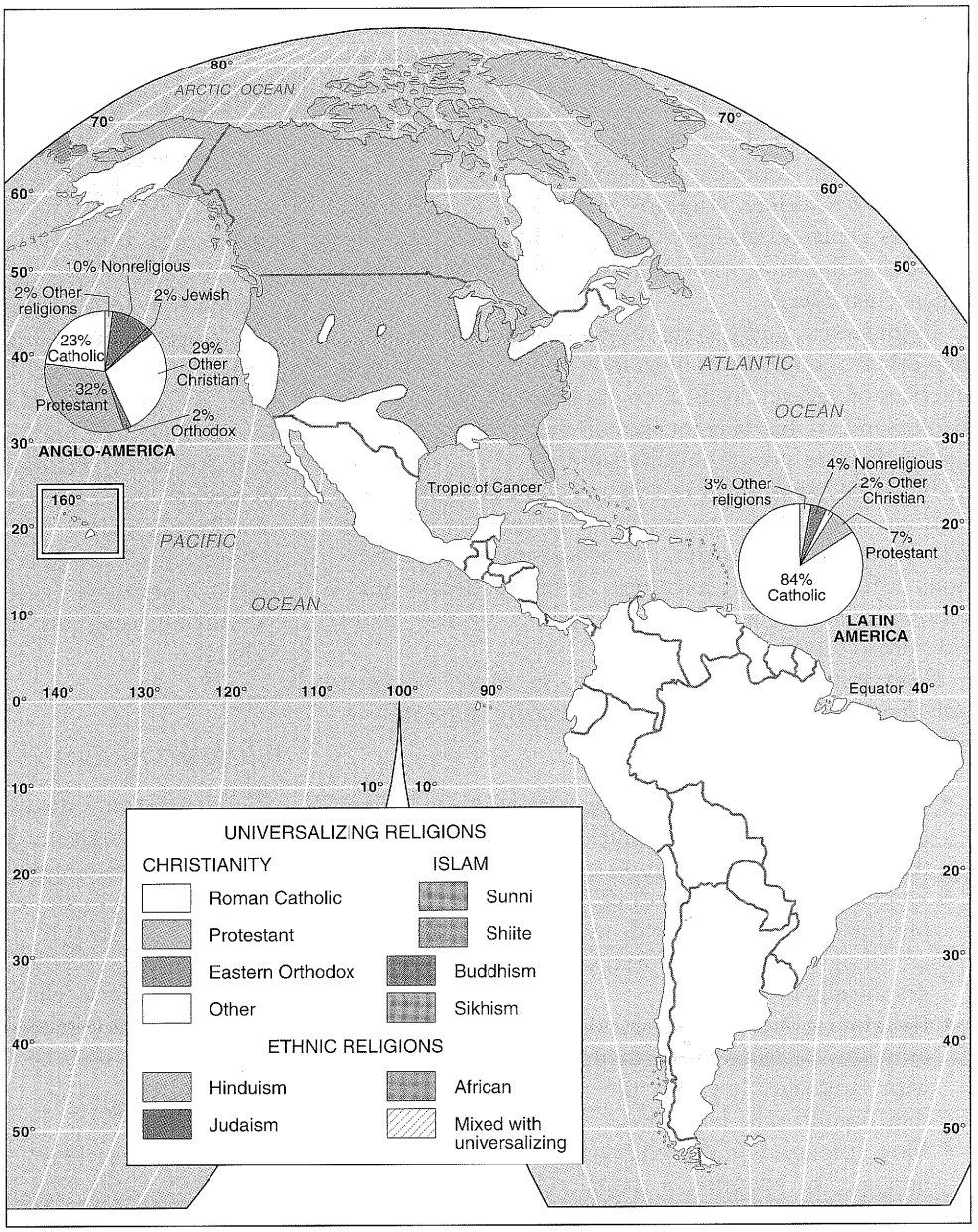
Branches of Christianity. Christianity has three major branches: Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox. Roman Catholics comprise approximately 50 percent of the world's Christians, Protestants 25 percent, and Eastern Orthodox 10 percent. The remaining 15 percent include Catholics other than Roman and followers of a variety of African, Asian, and Latin American Christian churches.

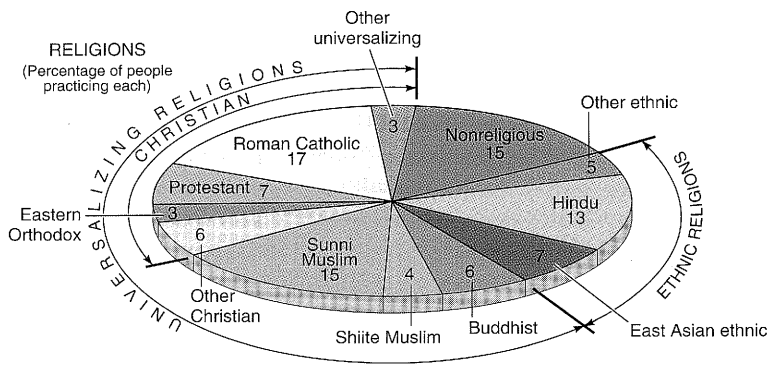
Within Europe, Roman Catholicism is the dominant Christian branch in the southwest and east, Protestantism in the northwest, and Eastern Orthodoxy in the east and southeast (Figure 6–2). The regions of Roman Catholic and Protestant majorities frequently have sharp boundaries, even when they run through the middle of countries. For example, the Netherlands and Switzerland

FIGURE 6–1 *World distribution of religions. More than two-thirds of Earth's people adhere to one of four religions:*

- *Christianity: 35 percent, especially in Europe and the Western Hemisphere*
- *Islam: 19 percent, especially in northern Africa and Southwest and Southeast Asia*
- *Hinduism: 14 percent, virtually all in India*
- *Buddhism: 6 percent, especially in East and Southeast Asia*

About 6 percent adhere to one of a number of ethnic religions based in China, Japan, and Korea. Three percent belong to another ethnic religion. The remaining 19 percent are nonreligious or atheists. In China and sub-Saharan Africa, many people profess adherence to both an ethnic and a universalizing religion. The small pie charts on the map show the overall proportion of the world's religions in each world region. The large pie chart below shows the worldwide percentage of people adhering to the various religions.



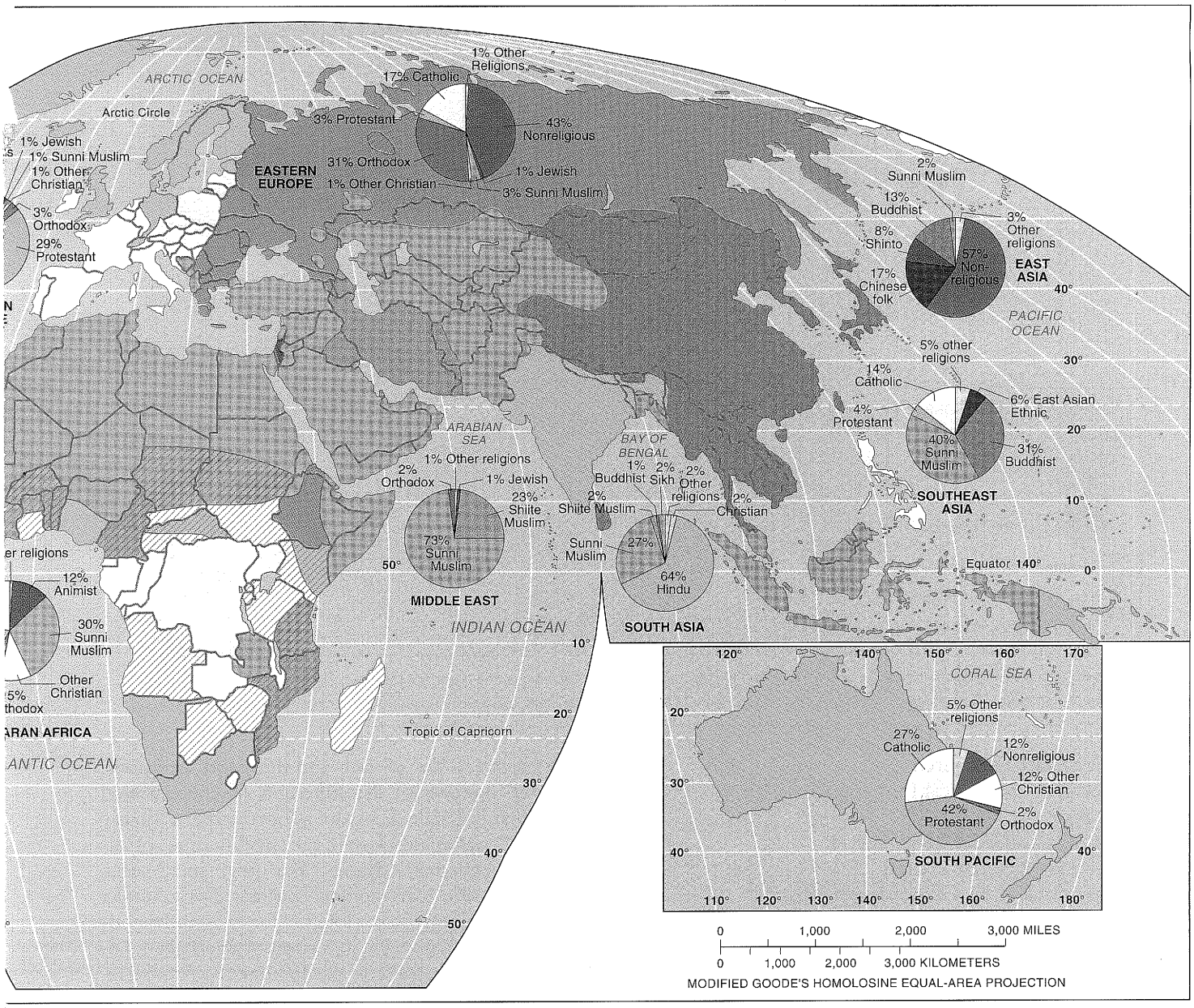


have approximately equal percentages of Roman Catholics and Protestants, but the Roman Catholic populations are concentrated in the south of these countries and the Protestant populations in the north.

The Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity is a collection of 14 self-governing churches in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. More than 40 percent of all Eastern Orthodox Christians belong to one of these 14, the Russian Orthodox Church. Christianity came to Russia in the tenth century, and the Russian Orthodox Church was established in the sixteenth century.

Nine of the other 13 self-governing churches were established in the nineteenth or twentieth century. The largest of these nine, the Romanian church, includes 20 percent of all Eastern Orthodox Christians. The Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian Orthodox churches have approximately 10 percent each. The other five recently established Orthodox churches—Albania, Cyprus, Georgia, Poland, and Sinai—combined have about 2 percent of all Eastern Orthodox Christians.

The remaining four of the 14 Eastern Orthodox churches—Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem—trace their origins to the earliest days of Christianity. They have a combined membership of about 3 percent of all Eastern Orthodox Christians.



Christianity in the Western Hemisphere. The overwhelming percentage of people living in the Western Hemisphere—about 90 percent—are Christian. About 5 percent belong to other religions, and the remaining 5 percent profess adherence to no religion.

A fairly sharp boundary exists within the Western Hemisphere in the predominant branches of Christianity. Roman Catholics comprise 95 percent of Christians in Latin America, compared with 25 percent in North America. Within North America, Roman Catholics are clustered in the southwestern and northeastern United States and the Canadian province of Québec (Figure 6–3).

Protestants comprise about 50 percent of the U.S. population. The four largest Protestant denominations in the United States are Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, and Lutheran. These are the churches to which at least 1 percent of Americans belong:

16 percent a Baptist church
- 9 percent a Southern Baptist Convention church
- 2 percent a National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., church
- 1 percent a National Missionary Baptist Convention of America church
- 1 percent a Progressive National Baptist Convention church
- 3 percent another Baptist church

7 percent a Methodist church
- 5 percent a United Methodist church
- 2 percent an African Methodist Episcopal or Episcopal Zion church

6 percent a Pentecostal church
- 3 percent a Church of God in Christ
- 2 percent one of the Assemblies of God churches
- 1 percent another Pentecostal church

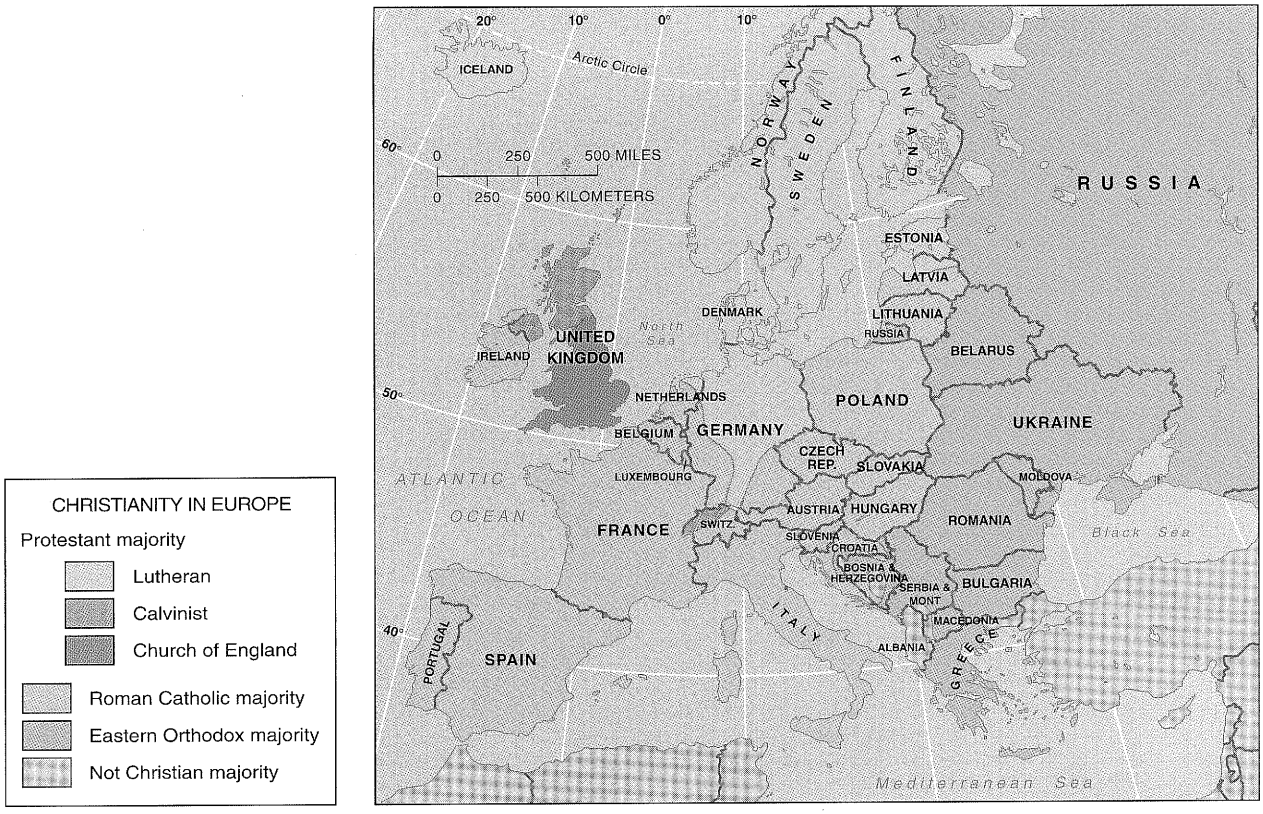


FIGURE 6–2 *Branches of Christianity in Europe. In the United Kingdom, Germany, and Scandinavia the majority adhere to a Protestant denomination. In Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Eastern Orthodoxy dominates. Roman Catholicism is dominant in Southern, Central, and Southwestern Europe.*

5 percent a Lutheran church
- 3 percent an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 2 percent another Lutheran church

2 percent a Presbyterian church
- 1 percent one of the Churches of Christ
- 1 percent one of the Reformed churches

1 percent an Episcopal church

Membership in some Protestant churches varies by region of the United States. Baptists, for example, are highly clustered in the southeast, and Lutherans in the upper midwest. Other Christian denominations are more evenly distributed around the country.

Smaller Branches of Christianity. Several other Christian churches developed independent of the three main branches. Many of these Christian communities were isolated from others at an early point in the development of Christianity, partly because of differences in doctrine and partly as a result of Islamic control of intervening territory in Southwest Asia and North Africa. Two small Christian churches survive in northeast Africa: the Coptic Church of Egypt and the Ethiopian Church. The Ethiopian Church, with perhaps 10 million adherents, split from the Egyptian Coptic Church in 1948, although it traces its roots to the fourth century, when two shipwrecked Christians, who were taken as slaves, ultimately converted the Ethiopian king to Christianity.

The Armenian Church originated in Antioch, Syria, and was important in diffusing Christianity to South and East Asia between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. The church's few present-day adherents are concentrated in Lebanon and Armenia, as well as northeastern Turkey and western Azerbaijan. Despite the small number of adherents, the Armenian Church, like other small sects, plays a significant role in regional conflicts. For example, Armenian Christians have fought for the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, a portion of Azerbaijan, because Nagorno-Karabakh is predominantly Armenian, whereas the remainder of Azerbaijan is overwhelmingly Shiite Muslim (see Chapter 7).

The Maronites are another example of a small Christian sect that plays a disproportionately prominent role in political unrest. They are clustered in Lebanon, which has suffered through a long civil war fought among religious groups (see Chapter 7).

In the United States, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) regard their church as a branch of Christianity separate from Protestant denominations. About 3 percent of Americans are members of the Latter-Day Saints, a large percentage clustered in Utah and surrounding states.

Islam

Islam, the religion of 1.3 billion people, is the predominant religion of the Middle East from North Africa to Central Asia (Figure 6–1). However, half of the world's Muslims live in four countries outside the Middle East: Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India. The word

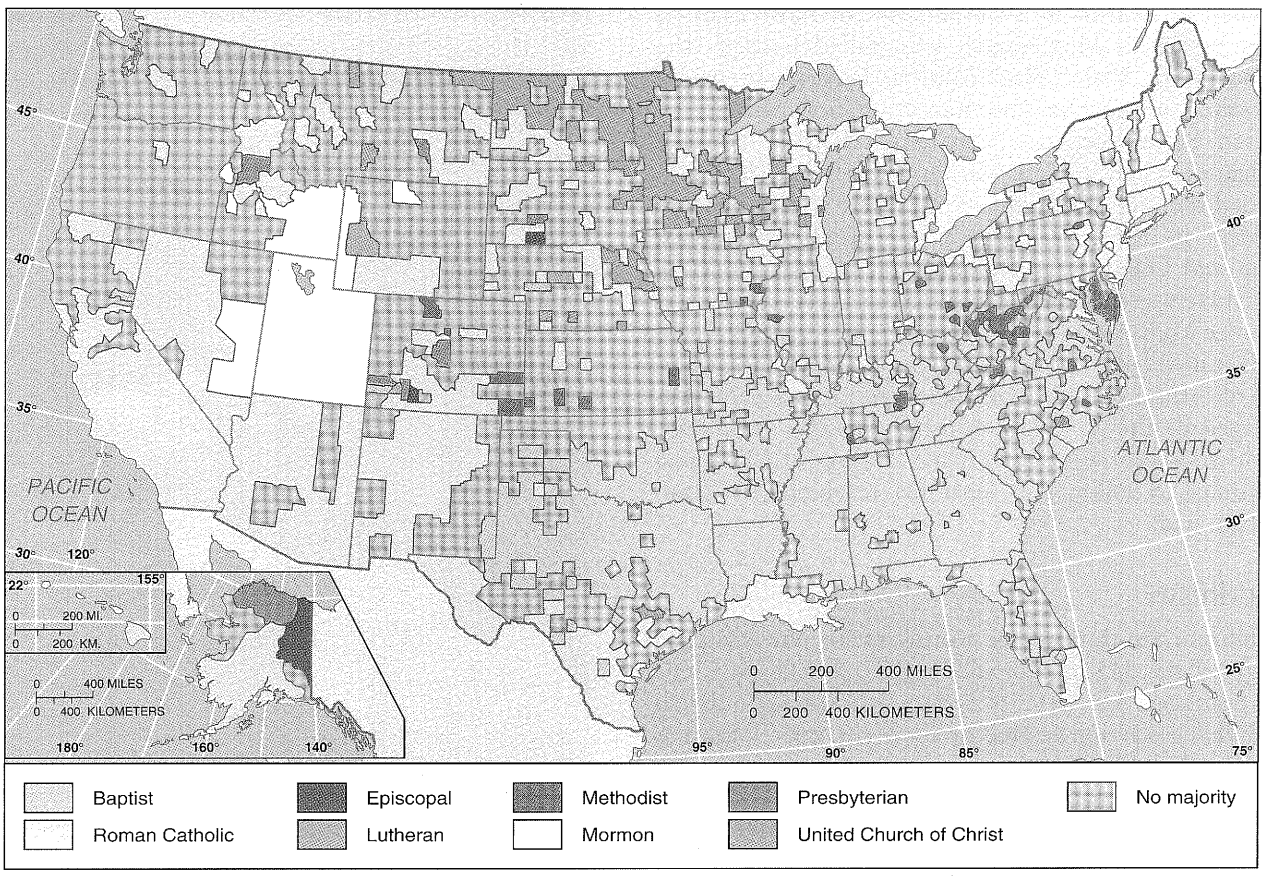


FIGURE 6–3 *Distribution of Christians in the United States. The shaded areas are U.S. counties in which more than 50 percent of church membership is concentrated in either Roman Catholicism or one Protestant denomination. Baptists are concentrated in the Southeast, Lutherans in the Upper Midwest, Mormons in Utah and contiguous states, and Roman Catholics in the Northeast and Southwest. The distinctive distribution of religious groups within the United States results from patterns of migration, especially from Europe in the nineteenth century and from Latin America in recent years.*

Islam in Arabic means *submission to the will of God*, and it has a similar root to the Arabic word for *peace*. An adherent of the religion of Islam is known as a Muslim, which in Arabic means *one who surrenders to God*.

The core of Islamic belief is represented by five pillars of faith:

1. There is no god worthy of worship except the one God, the source of all creation, and Muhammad is the messenger of God.
2. Five times daily, a Muslim prays, facing the city of Makkah (Mecca), as a direct link to God.
3. A Muslim gives generously to charity, as an act of purification and growth.
4. A Muslim fasts during the month of Ramadan, as an act of self-purification.
5. If physically and financially able, a Muslim makes a pilgrimage to Makkah.

Branches of Islam. Islam is divided into two important branches: *Sunni* (from the Arabic word for *orthodox*) and *Shiite* (from the Arabic word for *sectarian*, sometimes written *Shia* in English). Sunnis comprise 83 percent of Muslims and are the largest branch in most Muslim countries in the Middle East and Asia (see Figure 6–1).

Sixteen percent of Muslims are Shiites, clustered in a handful of countries. Nearly 40 percent of all Shiites live in Iran, 15 percent in Pakistan, 10 percent in Iraq, and 10 percent in Turkey, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, and Yemen. Shiites comprise more than 90 percent of the population in Iran and more than half of the population in Azerbaijan, Iraq, and the less populous countries of Oman and Bahrain.

Islam in North America and Europe. The Muslim population of North America and Europe has increased rapidly in recent years. In Europe, Muslims account for about 3 percent of the population. France has the largest Muslim population, about 4 million or 7 percent, a legacy of immigration from predominantly Muslim former colonies in North Africa. Albania, Bosnia, Germany, and Serbia each have about 2 million Muslims.

Most researchers of religion estimate the number of Muslims in the United States and Canada at between 3 to 4 million, an increase from only a few hundred thousand in 1990. Some Muslim community leaders believe the figure is higher because of undercounting of recent immigrants.

Islam also has a presence in the United States through the Nation of Islam, also known as Black Muslims,

founded in Detroit in 1930 and led for more than 40 years by Elijah Muhammad, who called himself "the messenger of Allah." Black Muslims lived austerely and advocated a separate autonomous nation within the United States for their adherents. Tension between Muhammad and a Black Muslim minister, Malcolm X, divided the sect during the 1960s. After a pilgrimage to Makkah in 1963, Malcolm X converted to orthodox Islam and founded the Organization of Afro-American Unity. He was assassinated in 1965.

Since Muhammad's death, in 1975, his son Wallace D. Muhammad led the Black Muslims closer to the principles of orthodox Islam, and the organization's name was changed to the American Muslim Mission. A splinter group adopted the original name, Nation of Islam, and continues to follow the separatist teachings of Elijah Muhammad.

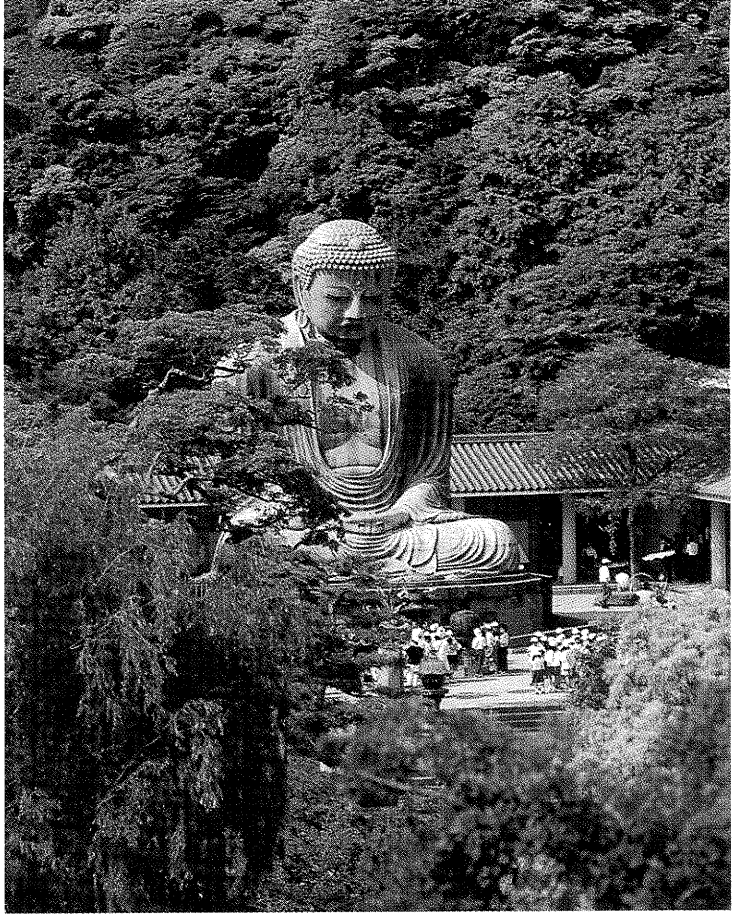
Buddhism

Buddhism, the third of the world's major universalizing religions, has 365 million adherents, especially in China and Southeast Asia (refer to Figure 6–1). The foundation of Buddhism is represented by these concepts, known as the Four Noble Truths:

1. All living beings must endure suffering.
2. Suffering, which is caused by a desire to live, leads to reincarnation (repeated rebirth in new bodies or forms of life).
3. The goal of all existence is to escape from suffering and the endless cycle of reincarnation into Nirvana (a state of complete redemption), which is achieved through mental and moral self-purification.
4. Nirvana is attained through an Eightfold Path, which includes rightness of belief, resolve, speech, action, livelihood, effort, thought, and meditation.

Like the other two universalizing religions, Buddhism split into more than one branch, as followers disagreed on interpreting statements by the founder, Siddhartha Gautama. The three main branches are Mahayana, Theravada, and Tantrayana. Mahayanists account for about 56 percent of Buddhists, primarily in China, Japan, and Korea. Theravadists comprise about 38 percent of Buddhists, especially in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The remaining 6 percent are Tantrayanists, found primarily in Tibet and Mongolia.

An accurate count of Buddhists is especially difficult, because only a few people participate in Buddhist institutions. Religious functions are performed primarily by monks rather than by the general public. Also, the number of Buddhists is difficult to count because Buddhism, although a universalizing religion, differs in significant respects from the Western concept of a formal religious system. Someone can be both a Buddhist and a believer in other Eastern religions, whereas Christianity and Islam both require exclusive adherence. Most Buddhists in China and Japan, in particular, believe at the same time in an ethnic religion.



The Great Buddha, Kamakura, Japan. The 13-meter (42-foot) tall bronze statue was cast in 1252.

Other Universalizing Religions

Sikhism and Bahá'í are the two universalizing religions other than Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism with the largest numbers of adherents. There are an estimated 24 million Sikhs and 7 million Bahá'ís. All but 3 million Sikhs are clustered in the Punjab region of India, whereas Bahá'ís are dispersed among many countries, primarily in Africa and Asia.

Sikhism's first guru (religious teacher or enlightener) was Nanak (A.D. 1469–1538), who lived in a village near the city of Lahore, in present-day Pakistan. God was revealed to Guru Nanak as The One Supreme Being, or Creator, who rules the universe by divine will. Only God is perfect, but people have the capacity for continual improvement and movement toward perfection by taking individual responsibility for their deeds and actions on Earth, such as heartfelt adoration, devotion, and surrender to the one God.

Sikhism's most important ceremony, introduced by the tenth guru, Gobind Singh (A.D. 1666–1708), is the Amrit (or Baptism), in which Sikhs declare they will uphold the principles of the faith. Gobind Singh also introduced the practice of men wearing turbans on their heads and never cutting their beards or hair. Wearing a uniform gave Sikhs a disciplined outlook and a sense of unity of purpose.

The Bahá'í religion is even more recent than Sikhism. It grew out of the Bábi faith, which was founded in Shíráz, Iran, in 1844 by Siyyid 'Ali Muhammad, known as the Báb (Persian for *gateway*). Bahá'ís believe that one

of the Báb's disciplines Husayn 'Ali Nuri, known as Bahá'u'lláh (Arabic for *Glory of God*), was the prophet and messenger of God. Bahá'u'lláh's function was to overcome the disunity of religions and establish a universal faith through abolition of racial, class, and religious prejudices.

Ethnic Religions

The ethnic religion with by far the largest number of followers is Hinduism. With 820 million adherents, Hinduism is the world's third-largest religion, behind Christianity and Islam. Ethnic religions in Asia and Africa comprise most of the remainder.

Hinduism

Ethnic religions typically have much more clustered distributions than do universalizing religions. Although Hinduism is the world's third-largest religion, 97 percent of Hindus are concentrated in one country, India. Two percent are in the neighboring country of Nepal, and the remaining 1 percent are dispersed around the world. Hindus comprise 80 percent of the population of India, 90 percent of Nepal, and a small minority in every other country.

Rigid approach to theological matters is not central to Hinduism. Hindus believe that it is up to the individual to decide the best way to worship God. Various paths to reach God include the path of knowledge, the path of renunciation, the path of devotion, and the path of action. You can pursue your own path and follow your own convictions, as long as they are in harmony with your true nature. You are responsible for your own actions and you alone suffer the consequences.

Because people start from different backgrounds and experiences, the appropriate form of worship for any two individuals may not be the same. Hinduism does not have a central authority or a single holy book, so each individual selects suitable rituals. If one person practices Hinduism in a particular way, other Hindus will not think that the individual has made a mistake or strayed from orthodox doctrine.

The average Hindu has allegiance to a particular god or concept within a broad range of possibilities. Manifestations of God, with the largest number of adherents—an estimated 70 percent—is Vaishnavism, which worships the god Vishnu, a loving god incarnated as Krishna. An estimated 25 percent adhere to Sivaism, dedicated to Siva, a protective and destructive god. Shaktism is a form of worship dedicated to the female consorts of Vishnu and Siva. Although these and other deities and approaches are supported throughout India, some geographic concentration exists: Siva and Shakti in the north, Shakti and Vishnu in the east, Vishnu in the west, and Siva, along with some Vishnu, in the south. However, holy places for Siva and Vishnu are dispersed throughout India.

Other Ethnic Religions

Several hundred million people practice ethnic religions in East Asia, especially in China and Japan. The coexistence of Buddhism with these ethnic religions in East Asia differs from the Western concept of exclusive religious belief. Confucianism and Daoism (sometimes spelled Taoism) are often distinguished as separate ethnic religions in China, but many Chinese consider themselves both Buddhists and either Confucian, Daoist, or some other Chinese ethnic religion.

Buddhism does not compete for adherents with Confucianism, Daoism, and other ethnic religions in China, because many Chinese accept the teachings of both universalizing and ethnic religions. Such commingling of diverse philosophies is not totally foreign to Americans. The tenets of Christianity or Judaism, the wisdom of the ancient Greek philosophers, and the ideals of the Declaration of Independence can all be held dear without doing grave injustice to the others.

Confucianism. Confucius (551–479 B.C.) was a philosopher and teacher in the Chinese province of Lu. His sayings, which were recorded by his students, emphasized the importance of the ancient Chinese tradition of *li*, which can be translated roughly as *propriety* or *correct behavior*. Confucianism is an ethnic religion because of its especially strong rooting in traditional values of special importance to Chinese people.

Confucianism prescribed a series of ethical principles for the orderly conduct of daily life in China, such as following traditions, fulfilling obligations, and treating others with sympathy and respect. These rules applied to China's rulers, as well as to their subjects.

Daoism (Taoism). Lao-Zi (604–531? B.C., also spelled Lao Tse), a contemporary of Confucius, organized Daoism. Although a government administrator by profession, Lao-Zi's writings emphasized the mystical and magical aspects of life rather than the importance of public service, as had Confucius.

Daoists seek *dao* (or *tao*), which means the *way* or *path*. A virtuous person draws power (*de* or *te*) from being absorbed in *dao*. *Dao* cannot be comprehended by reason and knowledge, because not everything is knowable. Because the universe is not ultimately subject to rational analysis, myths and legends develop to explain events. Only by avoidance of daily activities and introspection can a person live in harmony with the principles that underlie and govern the universe.

Daoism split into many sects, some acting like secret societies, and followers embraced elements of magic. The religion was officially banned by the Communists after they took control of China in 1949, but it is still practiced in China, and it is legal in Taiwan.

Shintoism. Since ancient times, Shintoism has been the distinctive ethnic religion of Japan. Ancient Shintoists considered forces of nature to be divine, especially the Sun and Moon, as well as rivers, trees, rocks, mountains,

and certain animals. The religion was transmitted from one generation to the next orally until the fifth century A.D., when the introduction of Chinese writing facilitated the recording of ancient rituals and prayers. Gradually, deceased emperors and other ancestors became more important deities for Shintoists than natural features.

Under the reign of the Emperor Meiji (1868–1912), Shintoism became the official state religion, and the emperor was regarded as divine. Shintoism therefore was as much a political cult as a religion, and in a cultural sense all Japanese were Shintoists. After defeating Japan in World War II, the victorious Allies ordered Emperor Hirohito to renounce his divinity in a speech to the Japanese people, although he was allowed to retain ceremonial powers.

Shintoism still thrives in Japan, although no longer as the official state religion. Prayers are recited to show reverance for ancestors, and pilgrimages are made to shrines believed to house deities.

Judaism. About 6 million Jews live in the United States, 4 million in Israel, 2 million in former Soviet Union republics, especially Russia, Belarus, Lithuania, and Ukraine, and 2 million elsewhere. Within the United States, Jews are heavily concentrated in the large cities, including one-third in the New York area alone. Jews constitute a majority in Israel, where for the first time since the biblical era an independent state has had a Jewish majority.

Judaism plays a more substantial role in Western civilization than its number of adherents would suggest, because two of the three main universalizing religions—Christianity and Islam—find some of their roots in Judaism. Jesus was born a Jew, and Muhammad traced his ancestry to Abraham.

Judaism is an ethnic religion based in the lands bordering the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, called Canaan in the Bible, Palestine by the Romans, and the state of Israel since 1948. About 4,000 years ago Abraham, considered the patriarch or father of Judaism, migrated from present-day Iraq to Canaan, along a route known as the Fertile Crescent (see discussion of the Fertile Crescent in Chapter 8 and Figure 8–3). The Old Testament recounts the ancient history of the Jewish people.

Fundamental to Judaism was belief in one all-powerful God. It was the first recorded religion to espouse **monotheism**, belief that there is only one God. Judaism offered a sharp contrast to the **polytheism** practiced by neighboring people, who worshipped a collection of gods. Jews considered themselves the "chosen" people, because God had selected them to live according to His ethical and moral principles, such as the Ten Commandments.

The name *Judaism* derives from *Judah*, one of the patriarch Jacob's 12 sons; *Israel* is another biblical name for Jacob. Descendants of 10 of Jacob's sons, plus two of his grandsons, constituted the 12 tribes of Hebrews who emigrated from Egypt in the Exodus narrative. Each received a portion of Canaan. Judah is one of the surviving tribes of Hebrews; 10 of the tribes were considered lost after they were conquered and forced to migrate to Assyria in 721 B.C.

Ethnic African Religions. About 10 percent of Africans follow traditional ethnic religions, sometimes called **animism**. Animists believe that such inanimate objects as plants and stones, or such natural events as thunderstorms and earthquakes, are "animated," or have discrete spirits and conscious life. Relatively little is known about African religions because few holy books or other written documents have come down from ancestors. Religious rituals are passed from one generation to the next by word of mouth.

African animist religions are apparently based on monotheistic concepts, although below the supreme god there is a hierarchy of divinities. These divinities may be assistants to god or personifications of natural phenomena, such as trees or rivers.

As recently as 1980, some 200 million Africans—half the population of the continent—were classified as animists. Some atlases and textbooks persist in classifying Africa as predominantly animist, even though the actual percentage is small and declining. Followers of traditional African religions now constitute a clear majority in Mozambique and four small West African countries, including Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Togo. About half the population is animist in Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Congo Republic, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe.

The rapid decline in animists in Africa has been caused by increases in the numbers of Christians and Muslims. Africa is now nearly 50 percent Christian—split about evenly among Roman Catholic, Protestant, and other—and another 40 percent are Muslims. The growth in the two universalizing religions at the expense of ethnic religions reflects fundamental geographical differences between the two types of religions, discussed in the next key issue.

KEY ISSUE 2

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Origin of religions
- Diffusion of religions
- Holy places
- The calendar

We can identify several major geographical differences between universalizing and ethnic religions. These differences include the locations where the religions originated, the processes by which they diffused from their place of origin to other regions, the types of places that are considered holy, the calendar dates identified as important holidays, and attitudes toward modifying the physical environment.

Origin of Religions

Universalizing religions have precise places of origin, based on events in the life of a man. Ethnic religions have unknown or unclear origins, not tied to single historical individuals.

Origin of Universalizing Religions

Each of the three universalizing religions can be traced to the actions and teachings of a man who lived since the start of recorded history. The beginnings of Buddhism go back about 2,500 years, Christianity 2,000 years, and Islam 1,500 years. Specific events also led to the division of the universalizing religions into branches.

Origin of Christianity. Christianity was founded upon the teachings of Jesus, who was born in Bethlehem between 8 and 4 B.C. and died on a cross in Jerusalem about A.D. 30. Raised as a Jew, Jesus gathered a small band of disciples and preached the coming of the Kingdom of God. The four Gospels of the Christian Bible—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—documented miracles and extraordinary deeds that Jesus performed. He was referred to as *Christ*, from the Greek word for the Hebrew word *messiah*, which means *anointed*.

In the third year of his mission, he was betrayed to the authorities by one of his companions, Judas Iscariot. After sharing the Last Supper (the Jewish Passover seder) with his disciples in Jerusalem, Jesus was arrested and put to death as an agitator. On the third day after his death, his tomb was found empty. Christians believe that Jesus died to atone for human sins, that he was raised from the dead by God, and that his Resurrection from the dead provides people with hope for salvation.

Roman Catholics accept the teachings of the Bible, as well as the interpretation of those teachings by the Church hierarchy, headed by the Pope. According to Roman Catholic belief, God conveys His grace directly to humanity through seven sacraments, including Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Anointing the sick, Matrimony, Holy Orders, and the Eucharist (the partaking of bread and wine that repeats the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper). Roman Catholics believe that the Eucharist literally and miraculously become the body and blood of Jesus while keeping only the appearances of bread and wine, an act known as transubstantiation.

Eastern Orthodoxy comprises the faith and practices of a collection of churches that arose in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire. The split between the Roman and Eastern churches dates to the fifth century, as a result of rivalry between the Pope of Rome and the Patriarchy of Constantinople, which was especially intense after the collapse of the Roman Empire. The split between the two churches became final in 1054, when Pope Leo IX condemned the Patriarch of Constantinople. Eastern Orthodox Christians accepted the seven sacraments but rejected doctrines that the Roman Catholic Church had added since the eighth century.

Protestantism originated with the principles of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. The Reformation movement is regarded as beginning when Martin Luther posted 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. According to Luther, individuals had primary responsibility for achieving personal salvation through direct communication with God. Grace is achieved through faith rather than through sacraments performed by the Church.

Origin of Islam. Islam traces its origin to the same narrative as Judaism and Christianity. All three religions consider Adam to have been the first man and Abraham to have been one of his descendants. According to legend, Abraham married Sarah, who did not bear children. Polygamy being a custom of the culture, Abraham then married Hagar, who bore a son, Ishmael. However, Sarah's fortunes changed, and she bore a son, Isaac. Sarah then successfully prevailed upon Abraham to banish Hagar and Ishmael.

Jews and Christians trace their story through Abraham's original wife Sarah and her son Isaac. Muslims trace their story through his second wife Hagar and her son Ishmael. After their banishment, Ishmael and Hagar wandered through the Arabian desert, eventually reaching Makkah (spelled Mecca on many English-language maps), in present-day Saudi Arabia. Centuries later one of Ishmael's descendants, Muhammad, became the Prophet of Islam.

Muhammad was born in Makkah about A.D. 570. At age 40, while engaged in a meditative retreat, Muhamad received his first revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel. The Quran, the holiest book in Islam, is a record of God's words, as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through Gabriel. Arabic is the lingua franca, or language of communication, within the Muslim world, because it is the language in which the Quran is written.

As he began to preach the truth that God had revealed to him, Muhammad suffered persecution, and in 622 he was commanded by God to emigrate. His migration from Makkah to the city of Yathrib—an event known as the *Hijra* (from the Arabic word for *migration*, sometimes spelled *hegira*)—marks the beginning of the Muslim calendar. Yathrib was subsequently renamed Madina, Arabic for *the City of the Prophet*. After several years Muhammad and his followers returned to Makkah and established Islam as the city's religion. By Muhammad's death, in 632 at about age 63, Islam had diffused to most of present-day Saudi Arabia.

Differences between the two main branches—Shiites and Sunnis—go back to the earliest days of Islam and basically reflect disagreement over the line of succession in Islamic leadership. Muhammad had no surviving son and no follower of comparable leadership ability. His successor was Abu Bakr (573–634), an early supporter from Makkah, who became known as *caliph* ("successor of the prophet"). The next two caliphs, Umar (634–644) and Uthman (644–656), expanded the territory under Muslim influence to Egypt and Persia.

Uthman was a member of a powerful Makkah clan that had initially opposed Muhammad before the clan's conversion to Islam. More zealous Muslims criticized Uthman for seeking compromises with other formerly pagan families in Makkah. Uthman's opponents found a leader in Ali (600?–661), a cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, and thus Muhammad's nearest male heir. When Uthman was murdered, in 656, Ali became caliph, although five years later he, too, was assassinated.

Ali's descendants claim leadership of Islam, and Shiites support this claim. But Shiites disagree among themselves about the precise line of succession from Ali to modern times. They acknowledge that the chain of leadership was broken, but they dispute the date and events surrounding the disruption. During the 1970s both the shah (king) of Iran and an ayatollah (religious scholar) named Khomeini claimed to be the divinely appointed interpreter of Islam for the Shiites. The allegiance of the Iranian Shiites switched from the shah to the ayatollah largely because the ayatollah made a more convincing case that he was more faithfully adhering to the rigid laws laid down by Muhammad in the Quran.

Origin of Buddhism. The founder of Buddhism, Siddhartha Gautama, was born about 563 B.C. in Lumbinī, in present-day Nepal, near the border with India, about 160 kilometers (100 miles) from Vārānasi (Benares). The son of a lord, he led a privileged existence sheltered from life's hardships. Gautama had a beautiful wife, palaces, and servants.

According to Buddhist legend, Gautama's life changed after a series of four trips. He encountered a decrepit old man on the first trip, a disease-ridden man on the second trip, and a corpse on the third trip. After witnessing these scenes of pain and suffering, Gautama began to feel he could no longer enjoy his life of comfort and security. Then, on a fourth trip, Gautama saw a monk, who taught him about withdrawal from the world.

At age 29 Gautama left his palace one night and lived in a forest for the next six years, thinking and experimenting with forms of meditation. Gautama emerged as the *Buddha*, the "awakened or enlightened one," and spent 45 years preaching his views across India. In the process, he trained monks, established orders, and preached to the public.

Theravada is the older of the two largest branches of Buddhism. The word means "the way of the elders," indicating the Theravada Buddhists' belief that they are closer to Buddha's original approach. Theravadists believe that Buddhism is a full-time occupation, so to become a good Buddhist, one must renounce worldly goods and become a monk.

Mahayana split from Theravada Buddhism about 2,000 years ago. *Mahayana* is translated as "the bigger ferry" or "raft," and Mahayanists call Theravada Buddhism by the name *Hinayana*, or "the little raft." Mahayanists claim that their approach to Buddhism can help more people because it is less demanding and all-encompassing. Whereas the Theravadists emphasize Buddha's life of self-help and years of solitary introspection, Mahayanists emphasize Buddha's later years of teaching and helping others. The Theravadists cite Buddha's wisdom, the Mahayanists his compassion.

Origin of Other Universalizing Religions. Sikhism and Bahá'í were founded more recently than the three large universalizing religions. The founder of Sikhism, Guru Nanak, traveled widely through South Asia around 500 years ago preaching his new faith, and many people became his *Sikhs*, which is the Hindi word for *disciples*. Nine other gurus succeeded Guru Nanak. Arjan, the fifth guru, compiled and edited in A.D. 1604 the *Guru Granth Sahib* (the Holy Granth of Enlightenment), which became the book of Sikh holy scriptures.

When it was established in Iran during the nineteenth century, Bahá'i provoked strong opposition from Shiite Muslims. The Báb was executed in 1850, as were 20,000 of his followers. Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet of Bahá'í, was also arrested, but was released in 1853 and exiled to Baghdad. In 1863 his claim that he was the messenger of God anticipated by the Báb was accepted by other followers. Before he died, in 1892, Bahá'u'lláh appointed his eldest son 'Abdu'l-Bahá (1844–1921) to be the leader of the Bahá'í community and the authorized interpreter of his teachings.

Origin of Hinduism, an Ethnic Religion

Unlike the three universalizing religions, Hinduism did not originate with a specific founder. The word *Hinduism* originated in the sixth century B.C. to refer to people living in what is now India. Whereas the origins of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism are recorded in the relatively recent past, Hinduism existed prior to recorded history. The earliest surviving Hindu documents were written around 1500 B.C., although archaeological explorations have unearthed objects relating to the religion from 2,500 B.C. Aryan tribes from Central Asia invaded India about 1400 B.C. and brought with them Indo-European languages, as discussed in Chapter 5. In addition to their language, the Aryans brought their religion.

The Aryans first settled in the area now called the Punjab in northwestern India and later migrated east to the Ganges River valley, as far as Bengal. Centuries of intermingling with the Dravidians already living in the area modified their religious beliefs.

Diffusion of Religions

The three universalizing religions diffused from specific hearths, or places of origin, to other regions of the world. In contrast, ethnic religions typically remain clustered in one location.

Diffusion of Universalizing Religions

The hearths where each of the three largest universalizing religions originated are based on the events in lives of the three key individuals (Figure 6–4). All

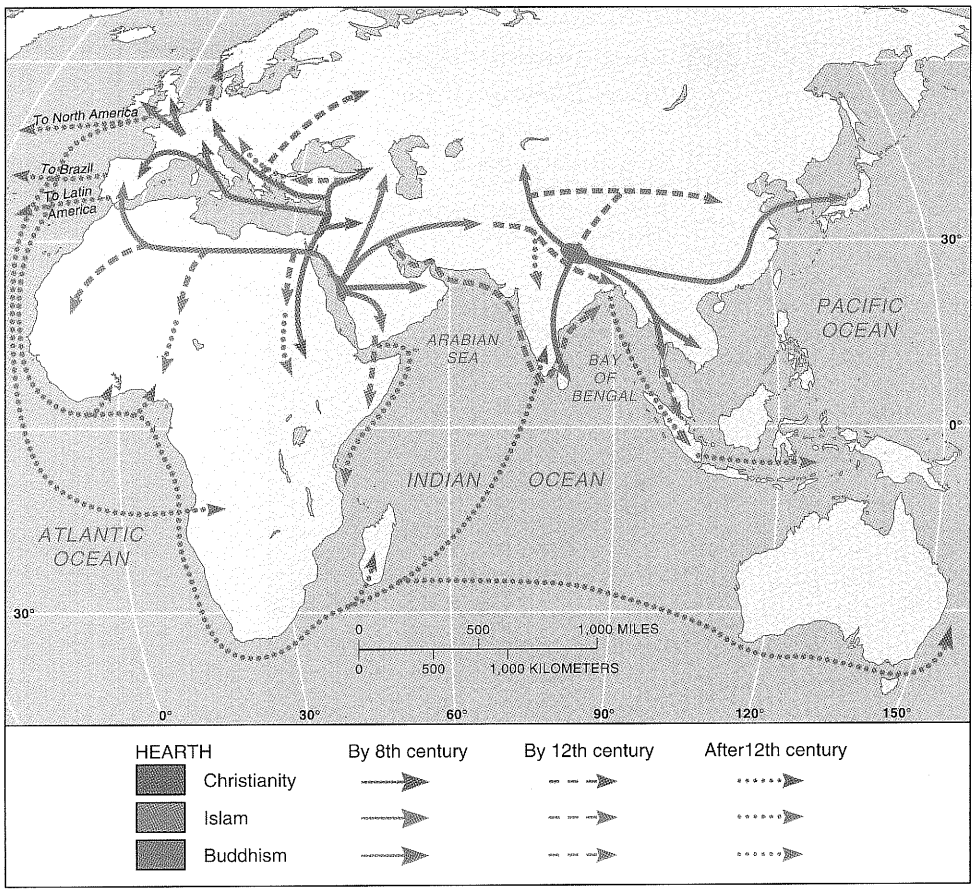


FIGURE 6–4 *Diffusion of universalizing religions. Buddhism's hearth is in present-day Nepal and northern India, Christianity's in present-day Israel, and Islam's in present-day Saudi Arabia. Buddhism diffused primarily east toward East and Southeast Asia, Christianity west toward Europe, and Islam west toward northern Africa and east toward southwestern Asia.*

hearths are in Asia (Christianity and Islam in Southwest Asia, Buddhism in South Asia). Followers transmitted the messages preached in the hearths to people elsewhere, diffusing them across Earth's surface along distinctive paths, as shown in Figure 6–4. Today these three universalizing religions together have several billion adherents distributed across wide areas of the world.

Diffusion of Christianity. Christianity's diffusion has been rather clearly recorded since Jesus first set forth its tenets in the Roman province of Palestine. Consequently, geographers can examine its diffusion by reconstructing patterns of communications, interaction, and migration.

Chapter 1 identified two processes of diffusion—relocation (diffusion through migration) and expansion (diffusion through a snowballing effect)—and within expansion diffusion we distinguished between hierarchical (diffusion through key leaders) and contagious (widespread diffusion). Christianity diffused through a combination of all of these forms of diffusion.

Christianity first diffused from its hearth in Palestine through relocation diffusion. **Missionaries**—individuals who help to transmit a universalizing religion through relocation diffusion—carried the teachings of Jesus along the Roman Empire's protected sea routes and excellent road network to people in other locations. Paul of Tarsus, a disciple of Jesus, traveled especially extensively through the Roman Empire as a missionary. The outline of the empire and spread of Christianity are shown in Figure 6–5.

People in commercial towns and military settlements that were directly linked by the communications network received the message first from Paul and other missionaries. But Christianity spread widely within the Roman Empire through contagious diffusion—daily contact between believers in the towns and nonbelievers in the surrounding countryside. **Pagan**, the word for a follower of a polytheistic religion in ancient times, derives from the Latin word for *countryside*.

The dominance of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire was assured during the fourth century through hierarchical diffusion—acceptance of the religion by the empire's key elite figure, the emperor. Emperor Constantine encouraged the spread of Christianity by embracing it in A.D. 313, and Emperor Theodosius proclaimed it the empire's official religion in 380. In subsequent centuries Christianity further diffused into Eastern Europe through conversion of kings or other elite figures.

Migration and missionary activity by Europeans since the year 1500 has extended Christianity to other regions of the world, as shown in Figure 6–1. Through permanent resettlement of Europeans, Christianity became the dominant religion in North and South America, Australia, and New Zealand. Christianity's dominance was further achieved by conversion of indigenous populations and by intermarriage. In recent decades

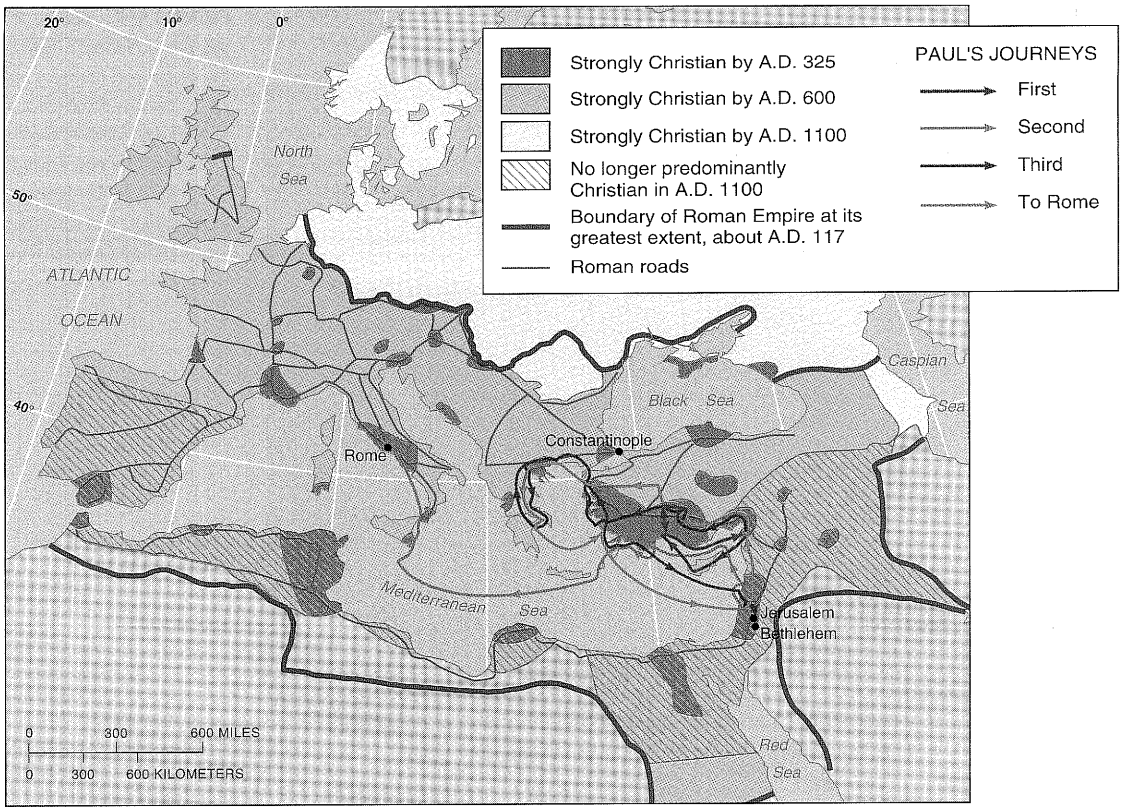


FIGURE 6–5 *Diffusion of Christianity. Christianity began to diffuse from Palestine through Europe during the time of the Roman Empire and continued after the empire's collapse. Muslims controlled portions of the Iberian Peninsula (Spain) for more than 700 years, until 1492. Much of southwestern Asia was predominantly Christian at one time, but today it is predominantly Muslim.*

Christianity has further diffused to Africa, where it is now the most widely practiced religion.

Latin Americans are predominantly Roman Catholic because their territory was colonized by the Spanish and Portuguese, who brought with them to the Western Hemisphere their religion as well as their languages. Canada (except Québec) and the United States have Protestant majorities because their early colonists came primarily from Protestant England.

Some regions and localities within the United States and Canada are predominantly Roman Catholic because of immigration from Roman Catholic countries (refer to Figure 6–3). New England and large midwestern cities such as Cleveland, Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee have concentrations of Roman Catholics because of immigration from Ireland, Italy, and Eastern Europe, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Immigration from Mexico and other Latin American countries has concentrated Roman Catholics in the Southwest, whereas French settlement from the seventeenth century, as well as recent immigration, has produced a predominantly Roman Catholic Québec.

Similarly, geographers trace the distribution of Protestant denominations within the United States to the fact that migrants came from different parts of Europe, especially during the nineteenth century. Followers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, popularly known as Mormons, settled at Fayette, New York, but after the death of their founder, Joseph Smith, the group moved several times in search of religious freedom. Eventually, under the leadership of Brigham Young, they migrated to the sparsely inhabited Salt Lake Valley in the present-day state of Utah.

Diffusion of Islam. Muhammad's successors organized followers into armies that extended the region of Muslim control over an extensive area of Africa, Asia, and Europe. Within a century of Muhammad's death, Muslim armies conquered Palestine, the Persian Empire, and much of India, resulting in the conversion of many non-Arabs to Islam, often through intermarriage. To the west, Muslims captured North Africa, crossed the Strait of Gibraltar, and retained part of Western Europe, particularly much of present-day Spain, until 1492 (Figure 6–6). During the same century that the Christians regained all of Western Europe, Muslims took control of much of southeastern Europe and Turkey.

As was the case with Christianity, Islam, as a universalizing religion, diffused well beyond its hearth in Southwest Asia through relocation diffusion of missionaries to portions of sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia. Although it is spatially isolated from the Islamic core region in Southwest Asia, Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country, is predominantly Muslim, because Arab traders brought the religion there in the thirteenth century.

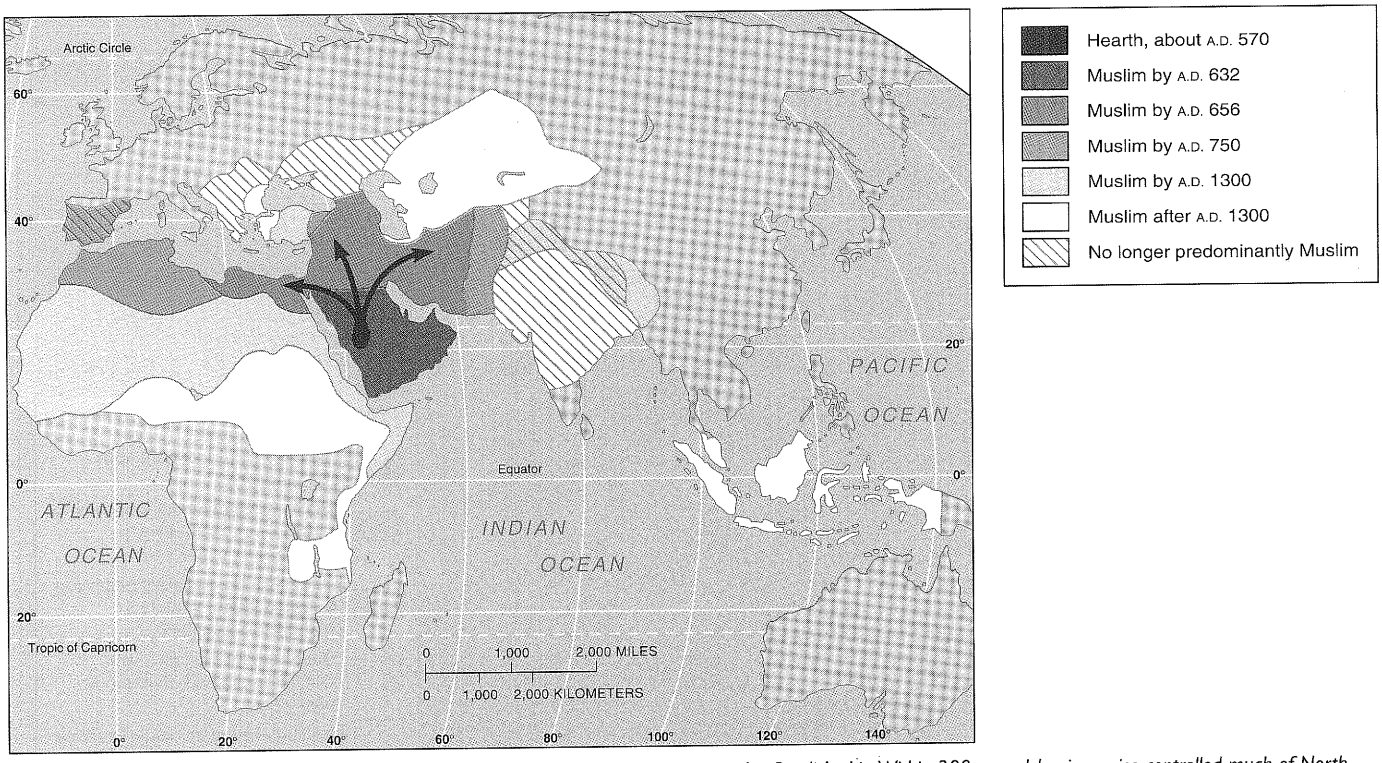


FIGURE 6–6 *Diffusion of Islam. Islam diffused rapidly from its point of origin in present-day Saudi Arabia. Within 200 years Islamic armies controlled much of North Africa, southwestern Europe, and southwestern Asia. Subsequently, Islam became the predominant religion as far east as Indonesia.*

Diffusion of Buddhism. Buddhism did not diffuse rapidly from its point of origin in northeastern India. Most responsible for the spread of Buddhism was Asoka, emperor of the Magadhan Empire from about 273 to 232 B.C. The Magadhan Empire formed the nucleus of several powerful kingdoms in South Asia between the sixth century B.C. and the eighth century A.D. About 257 B.C., at the height of the Magadhan Empire's power, Asoka became a Buddhist and thereafter attempted to put into practice Buddha's social principles.

A council organized by Asoka at Pataliputra decided to send missionaries to territories neighboring the Magadhan Empire. Emperor Asoka's son, Mahinda, led a mission to the island of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), where the king and his subjects were converted to Buddhism. As a result, Sri Lanka is the country that claims the longest continuous tradition of practicing Buddhism. Missionaries were also sent in the third century B.C. to Kashmir, the Himalayas, Burma (Myanmar), and elsewhere in India.

In the first century A.D., merchants along the trading routes from northeastern India introduced Buddhism to China. Many Chinese were receptive to the ideas brought by Buddhist missionaries, and Buddhist texts were translated into Chinese languages. Chinese rulers allowed their people to become Buddhist monks during the fourth century A.D., and in the following centuries Buddhism turned into a genuinely Chinese religion. Buddhism further diffused from China to Korea in the fourth century and from Korea to Japan two centuries later. During the same era, Buddhism lost its original base of support in India (Figure 6–7).

Diffusion of Other Universalizing Religions. The Bahá'í religion diffused to other regions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, under the leadership of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, son of the prophet Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'í also spread rapidly during the late twentieth century, when a temple was constructed in every continent.

Sikhism remained relatively clustered in the Punjab, where the religion originated. Sikhs fought with the Muslims to gain control of the Punjab region, and they achieved their ambition in 1802 when they created an independent state in the Punjab. The British took over the Punjab in 1849 as part of its India colony but granted the Sikhs a privileged position and let them fight in the British army. But when the British government created the independent states of India and Pakistan in 1947, it divided the Punjab between the two instead of giving the Sikhs a separate country. Preferring to live in Hindu-dominated India rather than Muslim-dominated Pakistan, 2.5 million Sikhs moved from Pakistan's West Punjab region to East Punjab in India.

Lack of Diffusion of Ethnic Religions

Most ethnic religions have limited, if any, diffusion. These religions lack missionaries who are devoted to converting people from other religions. Thus, the diffusion of universalizing religions, especially Christianity and Islam, typically comes at the expense of ethnic religions.

Mingling of Ethnic and Universalizing Religions. Universalizing religions may supplant ethnic religions or mingle with them. In some African countries Christian

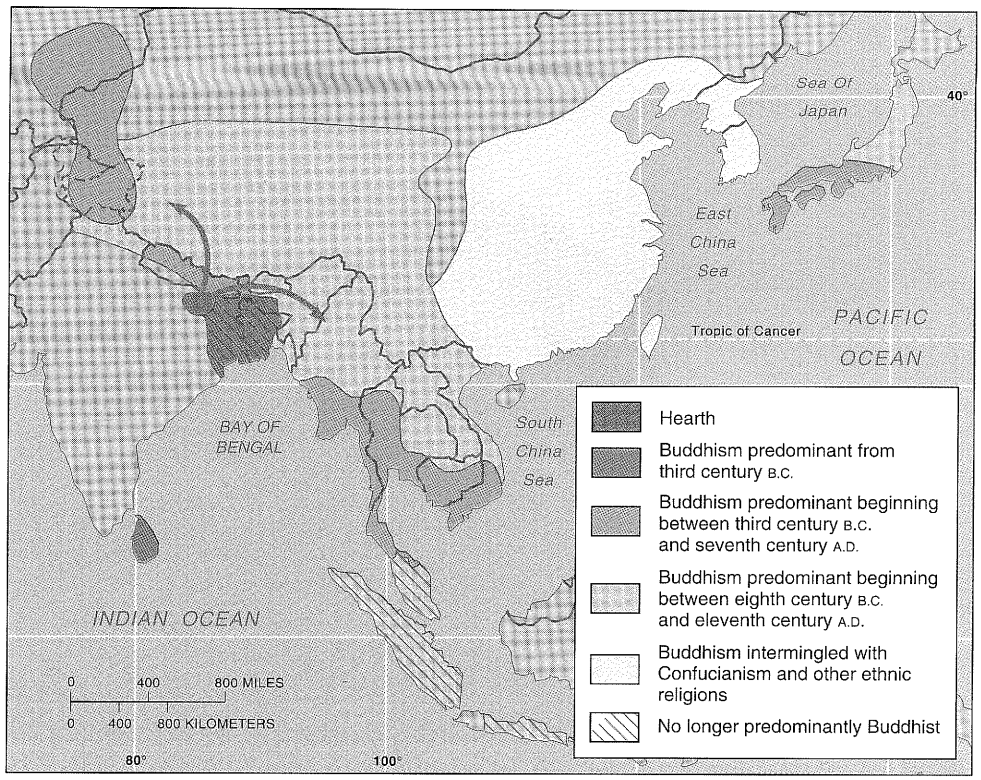


FIGURE 6–7 *Diffusion of Buddhism. In contrast to the other large universalizing religions, Buddhism diffused slowly from its core in northeastern India. Buddhism was not well established in China until 800 years after Buddha's death.*

practices are similar to those in their former European colonial masters. Equatorial Guinea, a former Spanish colony, is mostly Roman Catholic, whereas Namibia, a former German colony, is heavily Lutheran.

Elsewhere, traditional African religious ideas and practices have been merged with Christianity. For example, African rituals may give relative prominence to the worship of ancestors. Anglican bishops have decided that an African man who has more than one wife can become a Christian, as long as he does not add to the number of wives by further marriages. Desire for a merger of traditional practices with Christianity has led to the formation of several thousand churches in Africa not affiliated with established churches elsewhere in the world.

In East Asia, Buddhism is the universalizing religion that has most mingled with ethnic religions, such as Shintoism in Japan. Shintoists first resisted Buddhism, when it first diffused to Japan from Korea in the ninth century A.D. Later, Shintoists embraced Buddhism and amalgamated elements of the two religions. Buddhist priests took over most of the Shinto shrines, but Buddhist deities came to be regarded by the Japanese as Shintoist deities instead.

The current situation in Japan offers a strong caution to anyone attempting to document the number of adherents of any religion. Although Japan is a wealthy country with excellent record-keeping, the number of Shintos in the country is currently estimated at anywhere from 3 million to 110 million—and these extreme figures come from the same authoritative source, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica Year In Review*. About 90 percent of Japanese say they are Shintos and about 75 percent say they are Buddhists, so clearly most Japanese profess adherence to both religions. And it is impossible to gauge the strength of adherence to the two religions. Is one Japanese more Buddhist than Shinto, whereas another is more Shinto than Buddhist?

Mapping the distribution of support for Shintoism and Buddhism in Japan shows the extent of the overlap of the two religions. Nearly every locality displays either above-average support for both religions or below-average support for both religions, and only a handful are above average for one of the religions and below average for the other (Figure 6–8).

Ethnic religions can diffuse if adherents migrate to new locations for economic reasons and are not forced to adopt a strongly entrenched universalizing religion. For example, the 1 million inhabitants of Mauritius include 52 percent Hindu, 28 percent Christian (mostly Roman Catholic and some Anglican), and 17 percent Muslim. The religious diversity is a function of the country's history of immigration.

A 2,040-square-kilometer (788-square-mile) island located in the Indian Ocean 800 kilometers (500 miles) east of Madagascar, Mauritius was uninhabited until 1638, so it had no traditional ethnic religion. That year Dutch settlers arrived to plant sugarcane and naturally brought their religion—Christianity—with them. France gained control in 1721 and imported African slaves to work on the sugarcane plantations. Then the British took over in 1810 and brought workers from India. Mauritius became independent in 1992. Hinduism on Mauritius traces back to the Indian immigrants, Islam to the African immigrants, and Christianity to the European immigrants.

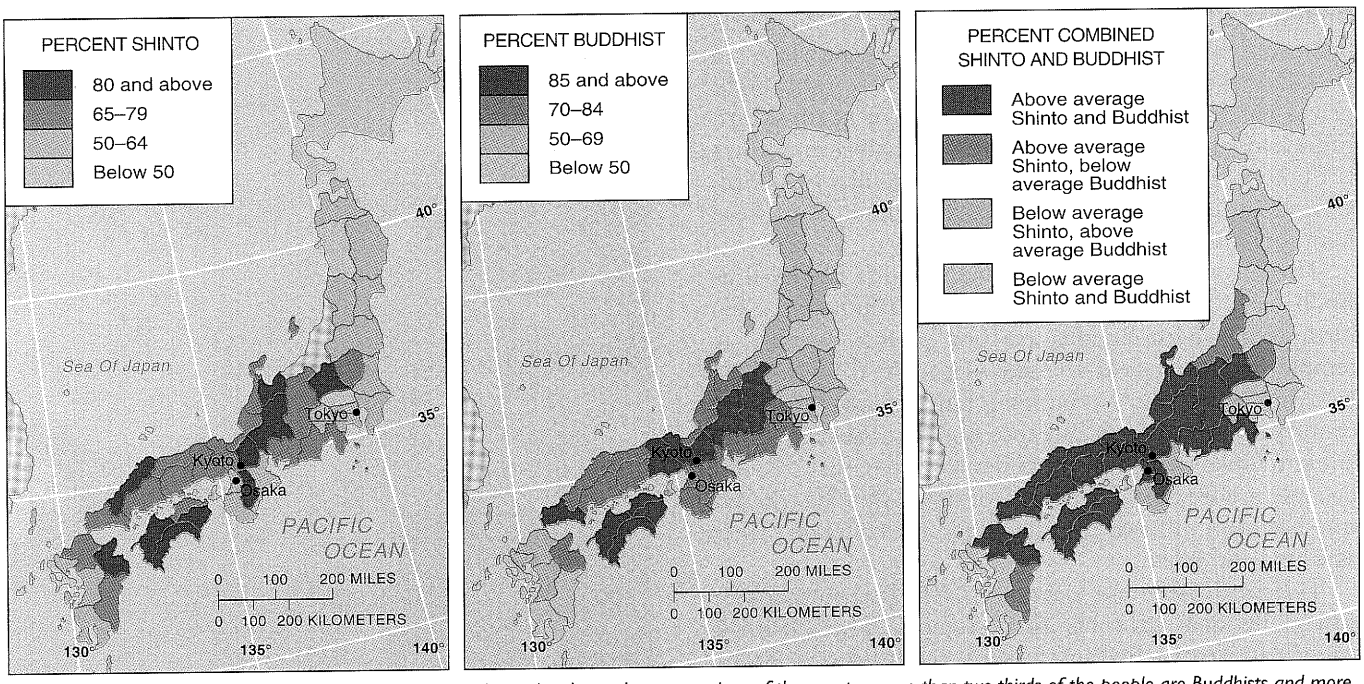


FIGURE 6–8 *Distribution of Shintos (left) and Buddhists (center) in Japan. In some regions of the country, more than two-thirds of the people are Buddhists and more than two thirds are Shintoists (right). This is possible because many people adhere simultaneously to both religions. In most places people are either more likely than average to be both Shinto and Buddhist or less likely than average to be both.*

Judaism, an Exception. The spatial distribution of Jews differs from that of other ethnic religions, because Judaism is practiced in many countries, not just its place of origin. Only since the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 has a significant percentage of the world's Jews lived in their Eastern Mediterranean homeland.

Most Jews have not lived in the Eastern Mediterranean since A.D. 70, when the Romans forced them to disperse throughout the world, an action known as the *diaspora*, from the Greek word for *dispersion*. The Romans forced the diaspora after crushing an attempt by the Jews to rebel against Roman rule.

Most Jews migrated from the Eastern Mediterranean to Europe, although some went to North Africa and Asia. Having been exiled from the home of their ethnic religion, Jews lived among other nationalities, retaining separate religious practices but adopting other cultural characteristics of the host country, such as language.

Other nationalities often persecuted the Jews living in their midst. Historically, the Jews of many European countries were forced to live in a **ghetto**, defined as a city neighborhood set up by law to be inhabited only by Jews. The term *ghetto* originated during the sixteenth century in Venice, Italy, as a reference to the city's foundry or metal-casting district, where Jews were forced to live. Ghettos were frequently surrounded by walls, and the gates were locked at night to prevent escape.

Beginning in the 1930s, but especially during World War II (1939–45), the Nazis systematically rounded up a large percentage of European Jews, transported them to concentration camps, and exterminated them. About 4 million Jews died in the camps, and 2 million in other ways. Many of the survivors migrated to Israel. Today about 10 percent of the world's 14 million Jews live in Europe, compared to 90 percent a century ago.

Holy Places

Religions may elevate particular places to a holy position. However, universalizing and ethnic religions differ on the types of places that are considered holy. An ethnic religion typically has a less widespread distribution than a universalizing one in part because its holy places derive from the distinctive physical environment of its hearth, such as mountains, rivers, or rock formations. A universalizing religion endows with holiness cities and other places associated with the founder's life. Its holy places do not necessarily have to be near each other, nor do they need to be related to any particular physical environment.

Making a **pilgrimage** to these holy places—a journey for religious purposes to a place considered sacred—is incorporated into the rituals of some universalizing and ethnic religions. Hindus and Muslims are especially encouraged to make pilgrimages to visit holy places in accordance with recommended itineraries, and Shintoists are encouraged to visit holy places in Japan.

Holy Places in Universalizing Religions

Buddhism and Islam are the universalizing religions that place the most emphasis on identifying shrines. Places are holy because they are the locations of important events in the life of Buddha or Muhammad.

Buddhist Shrines. Eight places are holy to Buddhists because they were the locations of important events in Buddha's life. The four most important of the eight places are concentrated in a small area of northeastern India and southern Nepal (Figure 6–9). Most important is Lumbinī in southern Nepal, where Buddha was born, around 563 B.C. Many sanctuaries and monuments were built there, but all are in ruins today.

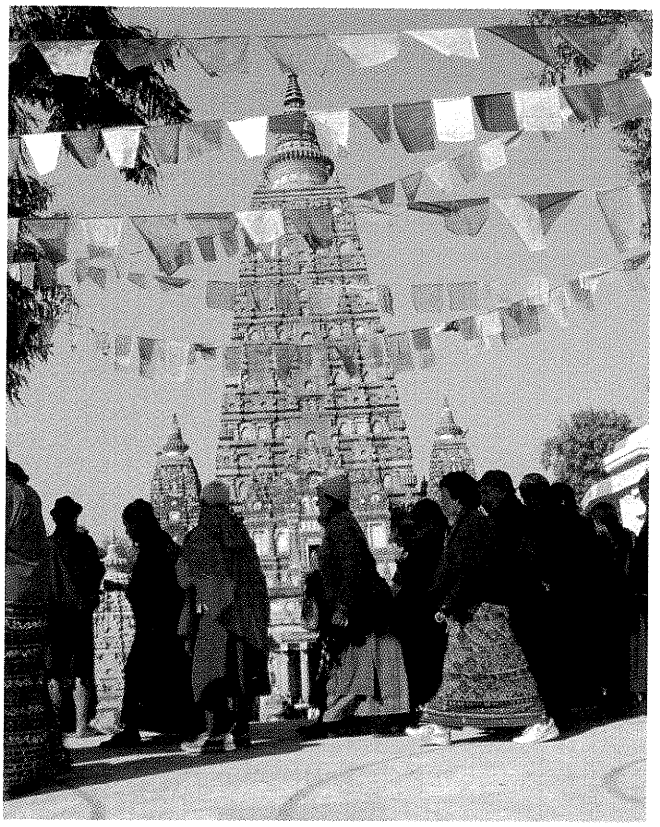
The second great event in Buddha's life occurred at Bodh Gayā 250 kilometers (150 miles) southeast of his birthplace, where Buddha reached perfect wisdom. A temple has stood near the site since the third century B.C., and part of the surrounding railing built in the first century A.D. still stands. Because Buddha reached perfect enlightenment while sitting under a bo tree, that tree has become a holy object as well. To honor Buddha, the bo tree has been diffused to other Buddhist countries, such as China and Japan.

The third important location is Deer Park in Sarnath, where Buddha gave his first sermon. The Dhamek pagoda at Sarnath, built in the third century B.C., is probably the oldest surviving structure in India. Nearby is an important library of Buddhist literature, including many works removed from Tibet when Tibet's Buddhist leader, the Dalai Lama, went into exile.

The fourth holy place is Kuśinagara, where Buddha died at age 80 and passed into nirvana, a state of peaceful extinction. Temples built at the site are currently in ruins.

Four other sites in northeastern India are particularly sacred because they were the locations of Buddha's principal miracles. At Srāvastī, Buddha performed his greatest miracle. Before an assembled audience of competing religious leaders, Buddha created multiple images of himself and visited heaven. Srāvastī became an active center of Buddhism, and one of the most important monasteries was established there.

At the second miracle site, Sāmkāśya, Buddha is said to have ascended to heaven, preached to his mother, and returned to Earth. The third site, Rajagrha, is holy because Buddha tamed a wild elephant there, and shortly after Buddha's death, it became the site of the first Buddhist Council. Vaisālī, the fourth location, is the site of Buddha's announcement of his impending death and the second Buddhist Council. All four miracle sites are in ruins today, although excavation activity is underway.



Bodh Gayā. Buddhist monks walk around the Maha Bodhi temple at Bodh Gayā, where Buddha reached perfect wisdom.

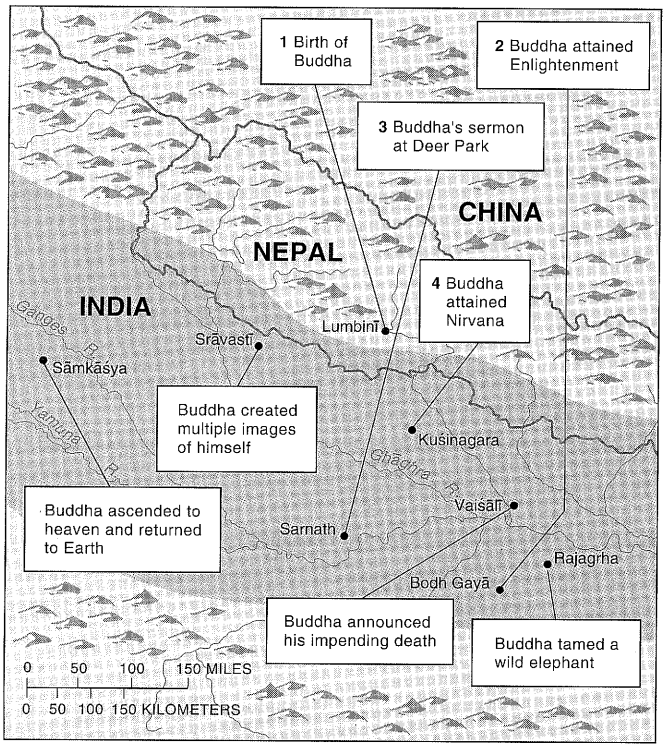


FIGURE 6–9 *Holy places in Buddhism. Most are clustered in northeastern India and southern Nepal, because they were the locations of important events in Buddha's life. Most of the sites are in ruins today.*

Holy Places in Islam. The holiest locations in Islam are in cities associated with the life of the Prophet Muhammad. The holiest city for Muslims is Makkah (Mecca), the birthplace of Muhammad. Now a city of more than a half million inhabitants, Makkah contains the holiest object in the Islamic landscape, al–Ka'ba, a cubelike structure encased in silk, which stands at the center of the Great Mosque, al-Haram al-Sharīf (Figure 6–10). The Ka'ba, thought to have been built by Abraham and Ishmael, contains a black stone given to Abraham by Gabriel as a sign of the covenant with Ishmael and the Muslim people.

The Ka'ba had been a religious shrine in Makkah for centuries before the origin of Islam. After Muhammad

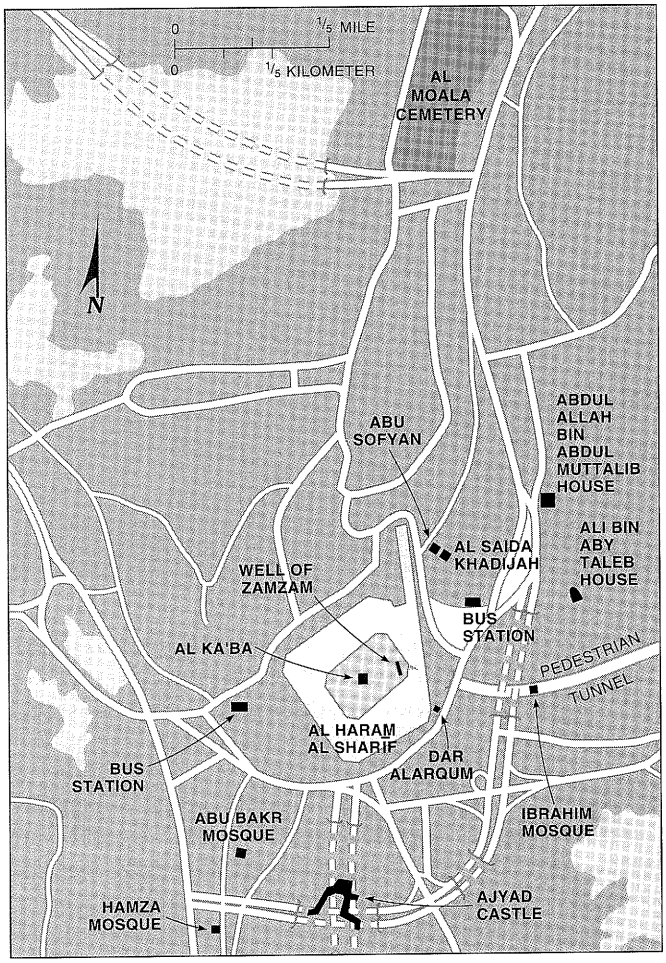


FIGURE 6–10 *Makkah (Mecca), in Saudi Arabia, is the holiest city for Muslims, because Muhammad was born there. Thousands of Muslims make a pilgrimage to Makkah each year and gather at al-Haram al-Sharif, a mosque in the center of the city. The black, cubelike structure in the center of the mosque, called al–Ka'ba, once had been a shrine to tribal idols until Muhammad rededicated it to Allah. Muslims believe that Abraham and Ishmael originally built the Ka'ba.*

defeated the local people, he captured the Ka'ba, cleared it of idols, and rededicated it to the all-powerful Allah (God). The al-Haram mosque also contains the well of Zamzam, considered to have the same water source as that used by Ishmael and Hagar when they were wandering in the desert after their exile from Canaan.

The second most holy geographic location in Islam is Madinah (Medina), approximately 350 kilometers (220 miles) north of Makkah. Muhammad received his first support from the people of Madinah and became the city's chief administrator. Muhammad's tomb is at Madinah, inside Islam's second mosque.

Every healthy Muslim who has adequate financial resources is expected to undertake a pilgrimage, called a *hajj*, to Makkah (Mecca). Regardless of nationality and economic background, all pilgrims dress alike in plain white robes to emphasize common loyalty to Islam and the equality of people in the eyes of Allah. A precise set of rituals is practiced, culminating in a visit to the Ka'ba. The word "mecca" now has a general meaning in the English language as a goal sought or a center of activity.

The *hajj* attracts 1 million Muslims a year to Makkah from countries other than Saudi Arabia. Roughly 40 percent each come from the Middle East and northern Africa, with the largest numbers from Nigeria, Turkey, and Yemen. Asian countries are responsible for most of the remaining 20 percent. Although Indonesia is the world's most populous Muslim country, it does not send the largest number of pilgrims to Makkah, because of the relatively long travel distance.

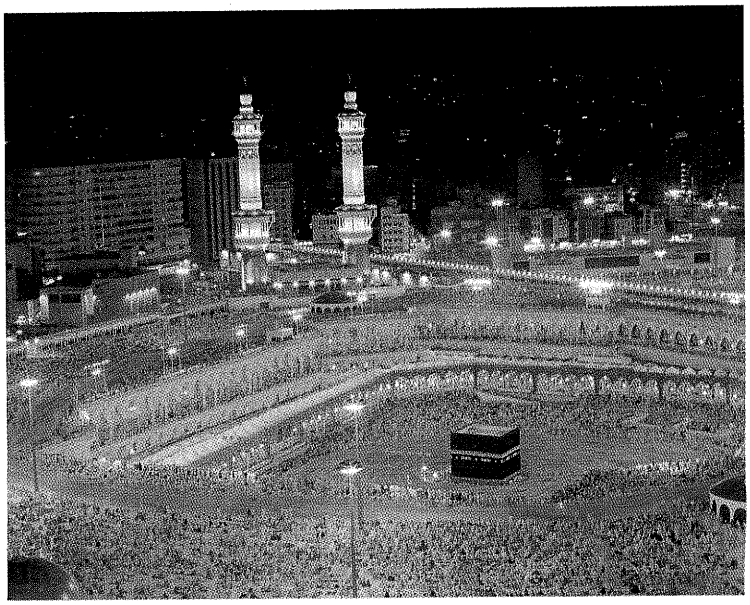
Holy Places in Sikhism. Sikhism's most holy structure, the Darbar Sahib, or Golden Temple, was built at Amritsar, in the Punjab, by Arjan, the fifth guru, during the seventh century. Militant Sikhs used the Golden Temple at Amritsar as a base for launching attacks in support of greater autonomy for the Punjab during the 1980s. In 1984 the Indian army attacked the Golden Temple at Amritsar and killed approximately a thousand Sikhs defending the temple. In retaliation later that year, India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by two of her guards, who were Sikhs.

Holy Places in Ethnic Religions

One of the principal reasons that ethnic religions are highly clustered is that they are closely tied to the physical geography of a particular place. Pilgrimages are undertaken to view these physical features.

Holy Places in Hinduism. As an ethnic religion of India, Hinduism is closely tied to the physical geography of India. According to a survey conducted by the geographer Surinder Bhardwaj, the natural features most likely to rank among the holiest shrines in India are riverbanks or coastlines.

Hindus consider a pilgrimage, known as a *tirtha*, to be an act of purification. Although not a substitute for meditation, the pilgrimage is an important act in achieving redemption. Hindu holy places are organized into a



The Darbar Sahib, or Golden Temple, at Amritsar, the most holy structure for the world's 22 million Sikhs, 21 million of whom are situated nearby in northwestern India.

hierarchy. Particularly sacred places attract Hindus from all over India, despite the relatively remote locations of some, whereas less important shrines attract primarily local pilgrims (Figure 6–11).

Because Hinduism has no central authority, the relative importance of shrines is established by tradition, not by doctrine. For example, many Hindus make long-distance pilgrimages to Mt. Kailās, located at the source of the Ganges in the Himalayas, which is holy because Siva lives there. At the same time, other mountains may attract only local pilgrims. Throughout India, local residents may consider a nearby mountain to be holy if Siva is thought to have visited it at one time.

Hindus believe that they achieve purification by bathing in holy rivers. The Ganges is the holiest river in India, because it is supposed to spring forth from the hair of Siva, one of the main deities. Indians come from all over the country to Hardwār, the most popular location for bathing in the Ganges.

The remoteness of holy places from population clusters once meant that making a pilgrimage required major commitments of time and money as well as undergoing considerable physical hardship. However, recent improvements in transportation have increased the accessibility of shrines. Hindus can now reach holy places in the Himalaya Mountains by bus or car, and Muslims from all over the world can reach Makkah by airplane.

Cosmogony in Ethnic Religions. Ethnic religions differ from universalizing religions in their understanding of relationships between human beings and nature. These differences derive from distinctive concepts of **cosmogony**, which is a set of religious beliefs concerning the origin of the universe. A variety of events in the physical environment are more likely to be incorporated into the principles of an ethnic religion. These events range from familiar and predictable to unexpected disasters.

For example, Chinese ethnic religions, such as Confucianism and Daoism, believe that the universe is made up of two forces, yin and yang, which exist in everything. The yin force is associated with earth, darkness, female, cold, depth, passivity, and death. The yang force is associated with heaven, light, male, heat, height, activity, and life. Yin and yang forces interact with each other to achieve balance and harmony, but they are in a constant state of change. An imbalance results in disorder and chaos. The principle of yin and yang applies to the creation and transformation of all natural features.

The universalizing religions that originated in Southwest Asia, notably Christianity and Islam, consider that God created the universe, including Earth's physical environment and human beings. A religious person can serve God by cultivating the land, draining wetlands, clearing forests, building new settlements, and otherwise making productive use of natural features that God created. As the very creator of Earth itself, God is more powerful than any force of nature, and if in conflict, the laws of God take precedence over laws of nature.

Christian and Islamic cosmogony do differ in some respects. For example, Christians believe that Earth was given by God to humanity to finish the task of creation. Obeying the all-supreme power of God meant independence from the tyranny of natural forces. Muslims regard humans as representatives of God on Earth, capable of reflecting the attributes of God in their deeds, such as growing food or other hard work to improve the land. But humans are not partners with God, who alone was responsible for Earth's creation.

In the name of God, some people have sought mastery over nature, not merely independence from it. Large-scale development of remaining wilderness is advocated by some religious people as a way to serve God. To those who follow this approach, failure to make full and complete use of Earth's natural resources is considered a violation of biblical teachings.

Christians are more likely to consider floods, droughts, and other natural disasters to be preventable and may take steps to overcome the problem by modifying the

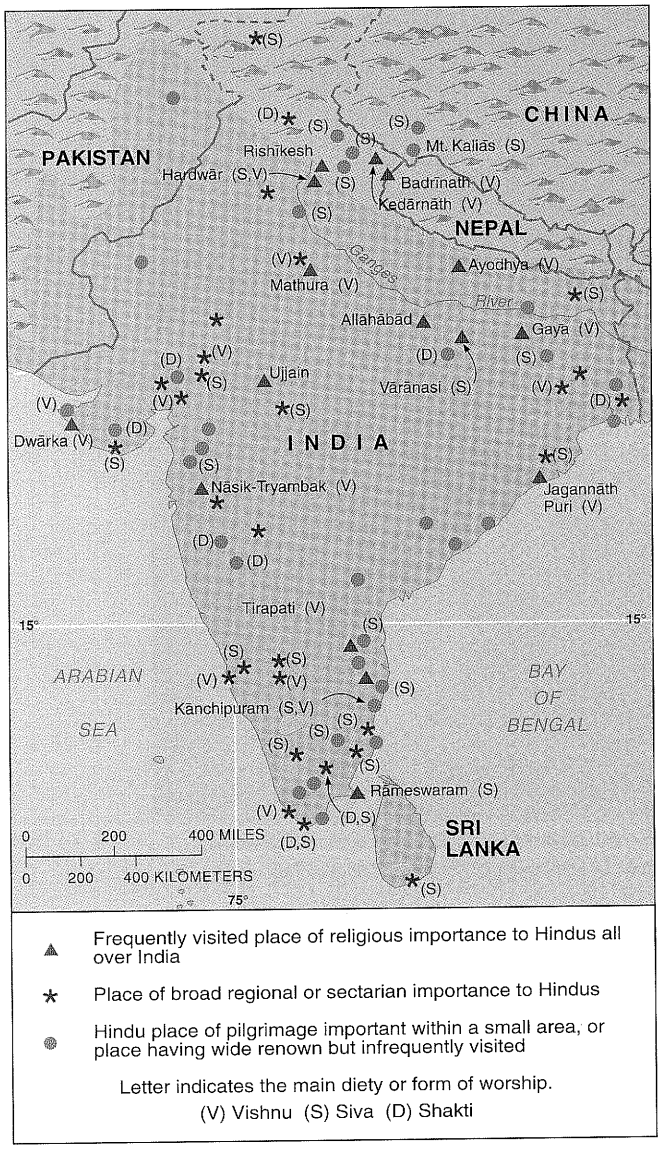


FIGURE 6-11 *Hierarchy of Hindu holy places. Some places are important to Hindus all over India and are visited frequently, whereas others have importance only to nearby residents. The map also shows that holy places for particular deities are somewhat clustered in different regions of the country—Shakti in the east, Vishnu in the west, and Siva in the north and south.*

environment. However, some Christians regard natural disasters as punishment for human sins.

Adherents of ethnic religions do not attempt to transform the environment to the same extent. To animists, for example, God's powers are mystical, and only a few people on Earth can harness these powers for medical or other purposes. God can be placated, however, through prayer and sacrifice. Environmental hazards may be accepted as normal and unavoidable.

The Calendar

Universalizing and ethnic religions have different approaches to the calendar. An ethnic religion typically has a more clustered distribution than a universalizing religion, in part because its holidays are based on the distinctive physical geography of the homeland. In universalizing religions, major holidays relate to events in the life of the founder rather than to the changing seasons of one particular place.

The Calendar in Ethnic Religions

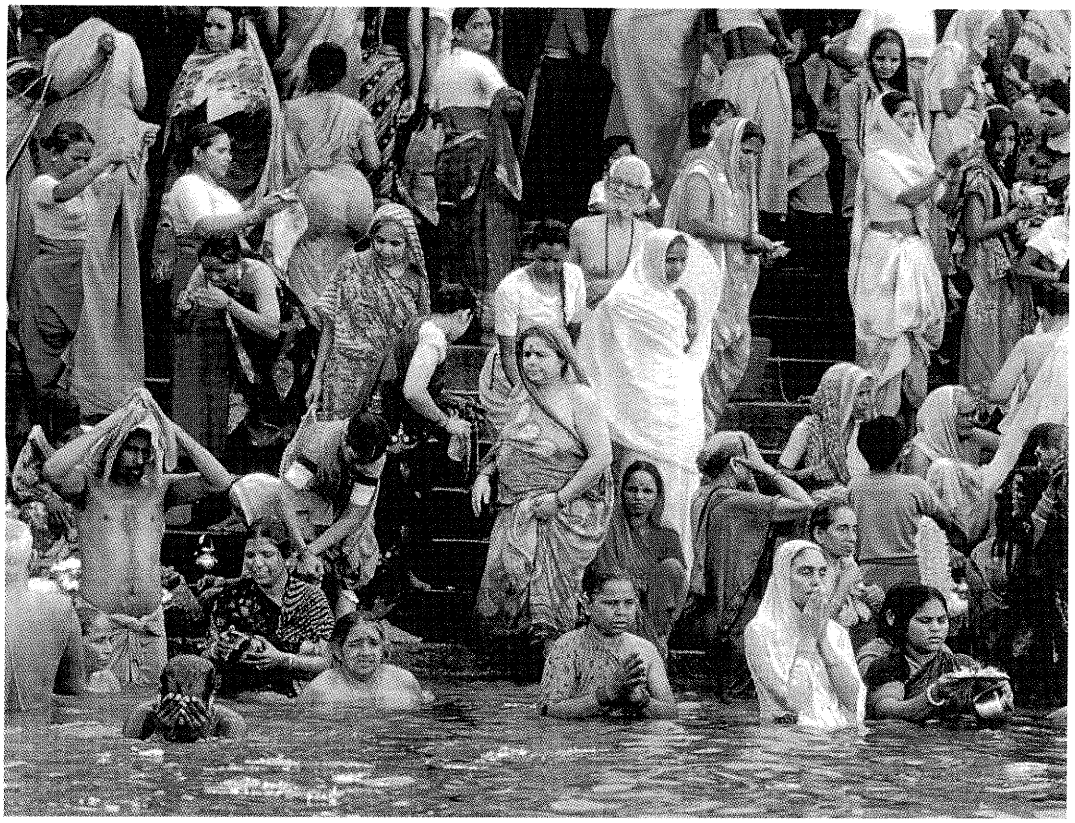
A prominent feature of ethnic religions is celebration of the seasons—the calendar's annual cycle of variation in climatic conditions. Knowledge of the calendar is critical to successful agriculture, whether for sedentary crop farmers or nomadic animal herders. The seasonal variations of temperature and precipitation help farmers select the appropriate times for planting and harvesting and make the best choice of crops.

Rituals are performed to pray for favorable environmental conditions or to give thanks for past success. The major religious events of the Bontok people of the Philippines, for example, revolve around the agricultural calendar. Sacred moments, known as *obaya*, include the times when the rice field is initially prepared, when the seeds are planted, when the seedlings are transplanted, when the harvest is begun, and when the harvest is complete.

The Jewish Calendar. Judaism is classified as an ethnic, rather than a universalizing, religion in part because its major holidays are based on events in the agricultural calendar of the religion's homeland in present-day Israel. In that Mediterranean agricultural region, grain crops generally are planted in autumn, which is a time of hope and worry over whether the winter's rainfall will be sufficient. The two holiest days in the Jewish calendar, Rosh Hashanah (New Year) and Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), come in the autumn.

The other three most important holidays in Judaism originally related even more closely to the agricultural cycle. *Sukkot* celebrates the final gathering of fruits for the year, and prayers, especially for rain, are offered to bring success in the upcoming agricultural year. *Pesach* (Passover) derives from traditional agricultural practices in which farmers offered God the first fruits of the new spring harvest and herders sacrificed a young animal at the time when cows began to calve. *Shavuot* (Feast of Weeks) comes at the end of the grain harvest.

These three agricultural holidays later gained importance because they also commemorated events in the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, as recounted in the Old Testament. Pesach recalled the liberation of the Jews from slavery in Egypt and the miracle of their successful flight under the leadership of Moses. Sukkot derived from the Hebrew word for the *booths*, or temporary shelters, occupied by Jews during their wandering in the wilderness for 40 years after fleeing Egypt. Shavuot was considered the date during the wandering when Moses received the Ten Commandments from God. The reinterpretation of natural holidays in the light of historical events has been especially important for Jews in the United States, Western Europe, and other regions who are unfamiliar with the agricultural calendar of the Middle East.



Bathing in the Ganges River. The river attracts Hindu pilgrims from all over India, because they believe that the Ganges springs from the hair of Siva, one of the main deities. Hindus achieve purification by bathing in the Ganges, and bodies of the dead are washed with water from it before being cremated.

In daily business North Americans use the solar calendar of 12 months, each containing 30 or 31 days, taking up the astronomical slack with 28 or 29 days in February. But Israel—the only country where Jews are in the majority—uses a lunar rather than a solar calendar. The Moon has a mystical quality because of its variation from one day to the next. From its fullest disk, the Moon becomes smaller and disappears altogether ("new Moon") before reappearing and expanding to a full Moon again. The appearance of the new Moon marks the new month in Judaism and Islam and is a holiday for both religions.

The lunar month is only about 29 days long, so a lunar year of about 350 days quickly becomes out of step with the agricultural seasons. The Jewish calendar solves the problem by adding an extra month seven out of every 19 years, so that its principal holidays are celebrated in the same season every year.

The Solstice. The **solstice** has special significance in some ethnic religions. A major holiday in some pagan religions is the winter solstice, December 21 or 22 in the Northern Hemisphere and June 21 or 22 in the Southern Hemisphere. The winter solstice is the shortest day and longest night of the year, when the Sun appears lowest in the sky and appears to stand still (*solstice* comes from the Latin *to stand still*). Stonehenge, a collection of rocks erected in southwestern England, probably by the Druids, is a prominent remnant of a pagan structure apparently aligned so the Sun rises between two stones on the solstice.

If you stand at the western facade of the U.S. Capitol in Washington at exactly sunset on the summer solstice (June 21 or 22 in the Northern Hemisphere) and look down Pennsylvania Avenue, the Sun is directly over the center of the avenue. Similarly, at the winter solstice sunset is directly aligned with the view from the Capitol down Maryland Avenue. Will archaeologists of the distant future think we erected the Capitol Building and aligned the streets as a religious ritual? Did the planner of Washington, Pierre L'Enfant, create the pattern accidentally or deliberately, and if so, why?

The Calendar in Universalizing Religions

The principal purpose of the holidays in universalizing religions is to commemorate events in the founder's life. Christians in particular associate their holidays with seasonal variations in the calendar, but climate and the agricultural cycle are not central to the liturgy and rituals.

Islamic and Bahá'í calendars. Islam, like Judaism, uses a lunar calendar. Whereas the Jewish calendar inserts an extra month every few years to match the agricultural and solar calendars, Islam as a universalizing religion retains a strict lunar calendar. In a 30-year cycle the Islamic

calendar has 19 years with 354 days and 11 years with 355 days.

As a result of using a lunar calendar, Muslim holidays arrive in different seasons from generation to generation. For example, during the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight every day and try to make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Makkah. At the moment, the start of Ramadan is occurring in the Northern Hemisphere autumn—for example, October 27, 2003, on the western Gregorian calendar. In A.D. 1990 Ramadan fell in March, and in A.D. 2010 Ramadan will be in August. Because Ramadan occurs at different times of the solar year in different generations, the number of hours of the daily fast varies widely, because the amount of daylight varies by season and by location on Earth's surface.

Observance of Ramadan can be a hardship by interfering with critical agricultural activities, depending on the season. However, as a universalizing religion with more than 1 billion adherents worldwide, Islam is practiced in various climates and latitudes. If Ramadan were fixed at the same time of the Middle East's agricultural year, Muslims in various places of the world would need to make different adjustments to observe Ramadan.

The Bahá'ís use a calendar established by the Báb and confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh, in which the year is divided into 19 months of 19 days each, with the addition of four intercalary days (five in leap years). The year begins on the first day of spring, March 21, which is one of several holy days in the Bahá'í calendar. Bahá'ís are supposed to attend the Nineteen Day Feast, held on the first day of each month of the Bahá'í calendar, to pray, read scriptures, and discuss community activities.

Christian, Buddhist, and Sikh Holidays. Christians commemorate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter, observed on the first Sunday after the first full Moon following the spring equinox in late March. But not all Christians observe Easter on the same day, because Protestant and Roman Catholic branches calculate the date on the Gregorian calendar, but Eastern Orthodox churches use the Julian calendar.

Christians may relate Easter to the agricultural cycle, but that relationship differs with where they live. In Southern Europe, Easter is a joyous time of harvest. Northern Europe and North America do not have a major Christian holiday at harvest time, which would be placed in the fall. Instead, Easter in Northern Europe and North America is a time of anxiety over planting new crops, as well as a celebration of spring's arrival after a harsh winter. In the United States and Canada, Thanksgiving has been endowed with Christian prayers to play the role of harvest festival.

Most Northern Europeans and North Americans associate Christmas, the birthday of Jesus, with winter conditions, such as low temperatures, snow cover, and absence of vegetation except needleleaf evergreens. But for Christians in the Southern Hemisphere, December 25 is the height of the summer, with warm days and abundant sunlight.

All Buddhists celebrate as major holidays Buddha's birth, Enlightenment, and death. However, Buddhists do not all observe them on the same days. Japanese Buddhists celebrate Buddha's birth on April 8, his Enlightenment on December 8, and his death on February 15, whereas Theravadist Buddhists observe all three events on the same day, usually in April.

The major holidays in Sikhism are the births and deaths of the religion's 10 gurus. The tenth guru, Gobind Singh, declared that after his death, instead of an eleventh guru, Sikhism's highest spiritual authority would be the holy scriptures of the Guru Granth Sahib. A major holiday in Sikhism is the day when the Holy Granth was installed as the religion's spiritual guide. Commemorating historical events distinguishes Sikhism as a universalizing religion, in contrast to India's major ethnic religion, Hinduism, which glorifies the physical geography of India.

KEY ISSUE 3

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Places of worship
- Sacred space
- Administration of space

Geographers study the major impact on the landscape made by all religions, regardless of whether they are universalizing or ethnic. In large cities and small villages around the world, regardless of the region's prevailing religion, the tallest most elaborate buildings are often religious structures.

The distribution of religious elements on the landscape reflects the importance of religion in people's values. The impact of religion on the landscape is particularly profound, for many religious people believe that their life on Earth ought to be spent in service to God.

Places of Worship

Church, basilica, mosque, temple, pagoda, and synagogue are familiar names that identify places of worship in various religions. Sacred structures are physical "anchors" of religion. All major religions have structures, but the functions of the buildings influence the arrangement of the structures across the landscape. They may house shrines or be places where people assemble for worship. Some religions require a relatively large number of elaborate structures, whereas others have more modest needs.

Christian Churches

The Christian landscape is dominated by a high density of churches. The word *church* derives from a Greek term meaning *lord*, *master*, and *power*. *Church* also refers to a gathering of believers, as well as the building where the gathering occurs.

The church plays a more critical role in Christianity than buildings in other religions, in part because the structure is an expression of religious principles, an environment in the image of God. The church is also more prominent in Christianity because attendance at a collective service of worship is considered extremely important.

The prominence of churches on the landscape also stems from their style of construction and location. Traditionally in some communities, the church was the largest and tallest building and was placed at an important square or other prominent location. Although such characteristics may no longer apply in large cities, they are frequently still true for small towns and neighborhoods within cities.

Underlying the large number and size of Christian churches is their considerable expense. Because of the importance of a place of worship, Christians have contributed much wealth to the construction and maintenance of churches. A wealthier congregation may build an elaborate structure designed by an architect to provide an environment compatible with the religious doctrine and ritual. Over the centuries the most prominent architects have been commissioned to create religious structures, such as those designed by Christopher Wren in London during the late seventeenth century.

Church Architecture. Early churches were modeled after Roman buildings for public assembly, known as *basilicas*. The basilica was a rectangular building divided by two rows of columns that formed a central nave (hall) and two side aisles. At the western end of the church stood a semicircular apse, in front of which was the altar, where the priest conducted the service. Later the apse was placed on the eastern wall. The raised altar, symbolizing the hill of Calvary, where Jesus was crucified, facilitated the reenactment at every service of Christ's sacrifice. Churches built during the Gothic period, between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, had a floor plan in the form of the cross.

Since Christianity split into many denominations, no single style of church construction has dominated. Churches reflect both the cultural values of the denomination and the region's architectural heritage. Eastern Orthodox churches, for example, follow an architectural style that developed in the Byzantine Empire during the fifth century. Byzantine-style Eastern Orthodox churches tend to be highly ornate, topped by prominent domes. Many Protestant churches in North America, on the other hand, are simple, with little ornamentation. This austerity is a reflection of the Protestant conception of a church as an assembly hall for the congregation.

Availability of building materials also influences church appearance. In the United States early churches were most frequently built of wood in the Northeast, brick in the Southeast, and adobe in the Southwest. Stucco and stone predominated in Latin America. This diversity reflected differences in the most common building materials found by early settlers.

Places of Worship in Other Religions

Religious buildings are highly visible and important features of the landscapes in regions dominated by religions other than Christianity. But unlike Christianity, other major religions do not consider their important buildings a sanctified place of worship.

Muslim Mosques. Muslims consider the mosque as a space for community assembly. In contrast to a church, however, a *mosque* is not viewed as a sanctified place but rather as a location for the community to gather together for worship. Mosques are found primarily in larger cities of the Muslim world, whereas simple structures may serve as places of prayer in rural villages.

The mosque is organized around a central courtyard—traditionally open air, although it may be enclosed in harsher climates. The pulpit is placed at the end of the courtyard facing Makkah, the direction toward which all Muslims pray. Surrounding the courtyard is a cloister used for schools and nonreligious activities. A distinctive feature of the mosque is the *minaret*, a tower where a man known as a *muzzan* summons people to worship (Figure 6–10 shows two minarets).

Hindu Temples. Sacred structures for collective worship are relatively unimportant in Asian ethnic and universalizing religions. Instead, important religious functions are more likely to take place at home within the family. Temples are built to house shrines for particular gods rather than for congregational worship.

The Hindu temple serves as a home to one or more gods, although a particular god may have more than one temple. Wealthy individuals or groups usually maintain local temples. Size and frequency of temples are determined by local preferences and commitment of resources rather than standards imposed by religious doctrine.

The typical Hindu temple contains a small, dimly lit interior room where a symbolic artifact or some other image of the god rests. The remainder of the temple may be devoted to space for ritual processions. Because congregational worship is not part of Hinduism, the temple does not need a large closed interior space filled with seats. The site of the temple, usually demarcated by a wall, may also contain a structure for a caretaker and a pool for ritual baths.

Buddhist and Shintoist Pagodas. The pagoda is a prominent and visually attractive element of the Buddhist and Shintoist landscapes. Frequently elaborate and delicate in appearance, pagodas typically include tall many-sided towers arranged in a series of tiers, balconies, and slanting roofs.

Pagodas contain relics that Buddhists believe to be a portion of Buddha's body or clothing. After Buddha's death, his followers scrambled to obtain these relics. As part of the process of diffusing the religion, Buddhists carried these relics to other countries and built pagodas for them. Pagodas are not designed for congregational

worship. Individual prayer or meditation is more likely to be undertaken at an adjacent temple, a remote monastery, or in a home.

Bahá'í Houses of Worship. Bahá'ís built seven Houses of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois; Frankfurt, Germany; Sydney, Australia; New Delhi, India; Apia, Western Samoa; Panama City, Panama; Ashkabad, Russia; and Kampala, Uganda. The locations were not selected because of proximity to clusters of Bahá'ís. Instead, the seven Houses of Worship were dispersed to different continents to dramatize Bahá'í as a universalizing religion with adherents all over the world. The Houses of Worship are open to adherents of all religions, and services include reciting the scriptures of various religions.

Sacred Space

The impact of religion is clearly seen in the arrangement of human activities on the landscape at several scales, from relatively small parcels of land to entire communities. How each religion distributes its elements on the landscape depends on its beliefs. The most significant religious land uses are for burial of the dead and religious settlements.

Disposing of the Dead

A prominent example of religiously inspired arrangement of land at a smaller scale is burial practices. Climate, topography, and religious doctrine combine to create differences in practices to shelter the dead.

Burial. Christians, Muslims, and Jews usually bury their dead in a specially designated area called a *cemetery*. The Christian burial practice can be traced to the early years of the religion. In ancient Rome, underground passages known as *catacombs* were used to bury early Christians (and to protect the faithful when the religion was still illegal).

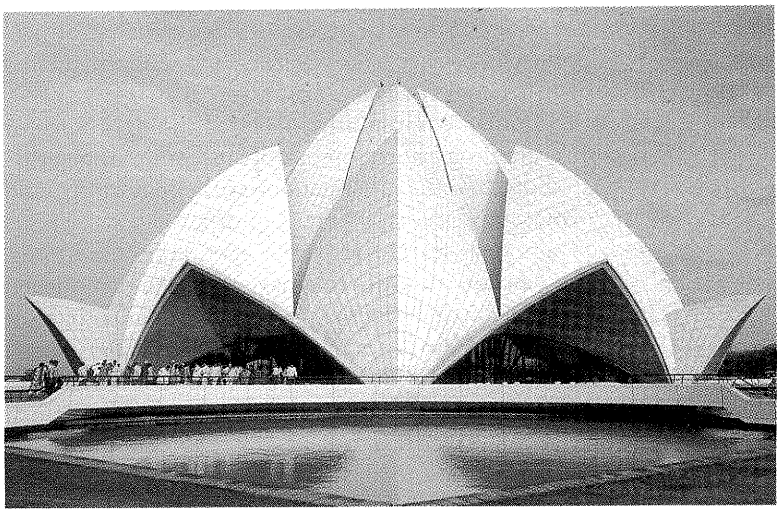
After Christianity became legal, Christians buried their dead in the yard around the church. As these burial places became overcrowded, separate burial grounds had to be established outside the city walls. Public health and sanitation considerations in the nineteenth century led to public management of many cemeteries. However, some cemeteries are still operated by religious organizations.

The remains of the dead are customarily aligned in some traditional direction. Some Christians bury the dead with the feet toward Jerusalem so that they may meet Christ there on the Day of Judgment. The Mandan Indians of the North American Plains placed the dead on scaffolds with the feet to the southeast, the direction the spirits were said to take in order to reach the Heart River, the place where the ancestors used to live. The face is often aligned toward the west, the direction where the Sun "dies" in its daily setting.

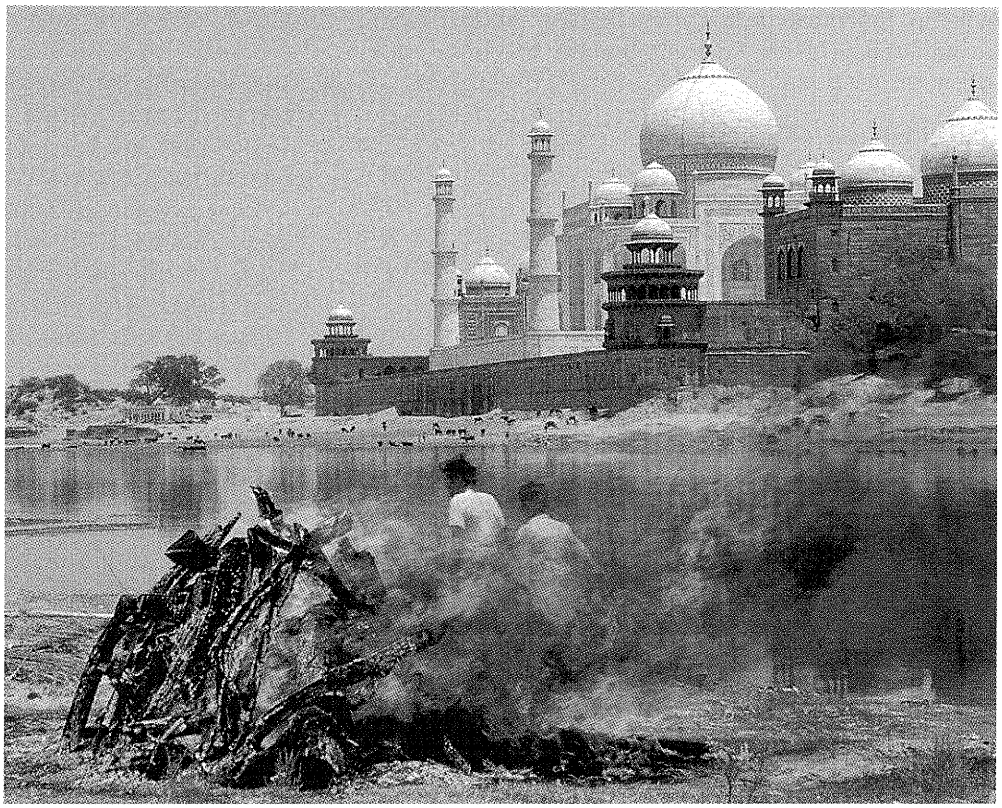
Cemeteries may consume significant space in a community, increasing the competition for scarce space. In congested urban areas, Christians and Muslims have traditionally used cemeteries as public open space. Before the widespread development of public parks in the nineteenth century, cemeteries were frequently the only green space in rapidly growing cities. Cemeteries are still used as parks in Muslim countries, where the idea faces less opposition than in Christian societies.

Traditional burial practices in China have put pressure on agricultural land. By burying dead relatives, rural residents have removed as much as 10 percent of the land from productive agriculture. The government in China has ordered the practice discontinued, even encouraging farmers to plow over old burial mounds. Cremation is encouraged instead.

Other Methods of Disposing of Bodies. Not all faiths bury their dead. Hindus generally practice cremation rather than burial. The body is washed with water from the Ganges River and then burned with a slow fire on a funeral pyre. Burial is reserved for children, ascetics, and people with certain diseases. Cremation is considered an act of purification, although it tends to strain India's wood supply.



Bahá'í Temple, New Delhi, India. Bahá'ís have built a Temple in each continent to demonstrate the religion's status as a universalizing religion, with adherents around the world.



Cremation. The most common form of disposal of bodies in India is cremation. In middle-class families, bodies are more likely to be cremated in an electric oven at a crematorium. A poor person may be cremated in an open fire, such as this one within sight of the Taj Mahal. High-ranking officials and strong believers in traditional religious practices may also be cremated on an outdoor fire.

Cremation was the principal form of disposing of bodies in Europe before Christianity. Outside of India, it is still practiced in parts of Southeast Asia, possibly because of Hindu influence.

Motivation for cremation may have originated from unwillingness on the part of nomads to leave their dead behind, possibly because of fear that the body could be attacked by wild beasts or evil spirits, or even return to life. Cremation could also free the soul from the body for departure to the afterworld and provide warmth and comfort for the soul as it embarked on the journey to the afterworld.

To strip away unclean portions of the body, Parsis (Zoroastrians) expose the dead to scavenging birds and animals. The ancient Zoroastrians did not want the body to contaminate the sacred elements of fire, earth, or water. Tibetan Buddhists also practice exposure for some dead, with cremation reserved for the most exalted priests.

Disposal of bodies at sea is used in some parts of Micronesia, but the practice is much less common than in the past. The bodies of lower-class people would be flung into the sea, whereas elites could be set adrift on a raft or boat. Water burial was regarded as a safeguard against being contaminated by the dead.

Religious Settlements

Buildings for worship and burial places are smaller-scale manifestations of religion on the landscape, but there are larger-scale examples: entire settlements. Most human settlements serve an economic purpose (Chapter 12), but some are established primarily for religious reasons.

A utopian settlement is an ideal community built around a religious way of life. By 1858 some 130 different utopian settlements had begun in the United States in conformance with a group's distinctive religious beliefs. Examples include Oneida, New York; Ephrata, Pennsylvania; Nauvoo, Illinois; and New Harmony, Indiana. Buildings were sited and economic activities organized to integrate religious principles into all aspects of daily life.

An early utopian settlement in the United States was Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, founded in 1741 by Moravians, Christians who had emigrated from the present-day Czech Republic. The culmination of the utopian movement in the United States was the construction of Salt Lake City by the Mormons, beginning in 1848. The layout of Salt Lake City is based on a plan of the city of Zion given to the church elders in 1833 by the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith. The city has a regular grid pattern, unusually broad boulevards, and church-related buildings situated at strategic points.

Most utopian communities declined in importance or disappeared altogether. Some utopian communities disappeared because the inhabitants were celibate and could not attract immigrants, whereas in other cases residents moved away in search of better economic conditions. The utopian communities that have not been demolished are now inhabited by people who are not members of the original religious sect, although a few have been preserved as museums.

Although most colonial settlements were not planned primarily for religious purposes, religious principles affected many of the designs. Most early New England settlers were members of a Puritan Protestant

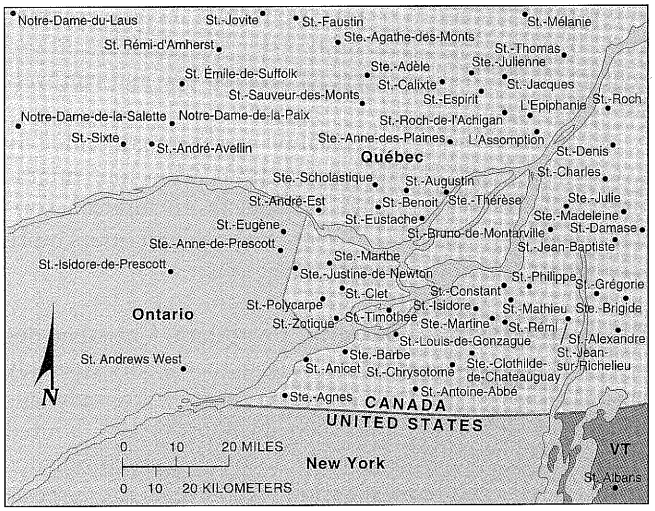


FIGURE 6–12 *Place names near Québec's boundaries with Ontario and New York State shows the impact of religion on the landscape. In Québec, a province with a predominantly Roman Catholic population, a large number of settlements are named for saints, whereas relatively few religious toponyms are found in predominantly Protestant Ontario and New York.*

denomination. The Puritans generally migrated together from England and preferred to live near each other in clustered settlements rather than on dispersed, isolated farms. Reflecting the importance of religion in their lives, New England settlers placed the church at the most prominent location in the center of the settlement, usually adjacent to a public open space, known as a *common* because it was for common use by everyone.

Religious Place Names

Roman Catholic immigrants frequently have given religious place names, or toponyms, to their settlements in the New World, particularly in Québec and the U.S. Southwest. Québec's boundaries with Ontario and the United States clearly illustrate the difference between toponyms selected by Roman Catholic and Protestant settlers. Religious place names are common in Québec but rare in the two neighbors (Figure 6–12).

Administration of Space

Followers of a universalizing religion must be connected so as to ensure communication and consistency of doctrine. The method of interaction varies among universalizing religions, branches, and denominations. Ethnic religions tend not to have organized, central authorities.

Hierarchical Religions

A **hierarchical religion** has a well-defined geographic structure and organizes territory into local administrative units. Roman Catholicism provides a good example of a hierarchical religion.

Roman Catholic Hierarchy. The Roman Catholic Church has organized much of Earth's inhabited land into an administrative structure, ultimately accountable to the Pope in Rome. Here is the top hierarchy of Roman Catholicism:

- The *Pope* (he is also the bishop of the Diocese of Rome).
- Reporting to the Pope are *archbishops*. Each heads a *province*, which is a group of several dioceses. (The archbishop also is bishop of one diocese within the province, and some distinguished archbishops are elevated to the rank of *cardinal*.)
- Reporting to each archbishop are *bishops*. Each administers a **diocese**, of which there are several thousand. The diocese is the basic unit of geographic organization in the Roman Catholic Church. The bishop's headquarters, called a "see," is typically the largest city in the diocese.
- A diocese in turn is spatially divided into *parishes*, each headed by a *priest*.

The area and population of parishes and dioceses vary according to historical factors and the distribution of Roman Catholics across Earth's surface (e.g., the United States is shown in Figure 6–13). In parts of Southern and Western Europe the overwhelming majority of the dense population is Roman Catholic. Consequently, the density

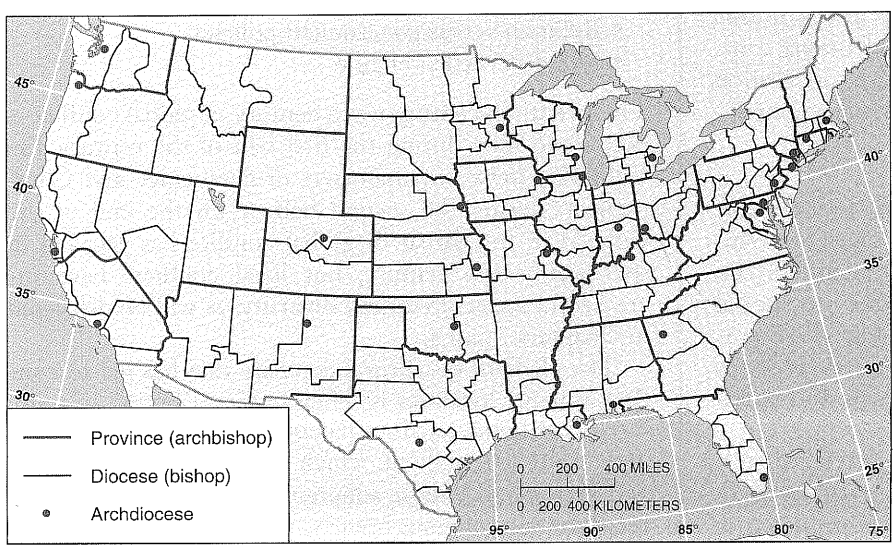


FIGURE 6–13 *Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States. The Roman Catholic Church divides the United States into provinces, each headed by an archbishop. Provinces are subdivided into dioceses, each headed by a bishop. The archbishop of a province also serves as the bishop of a diocese. Dioceses that are headed by archbishops are called archdioceses.*

of parishes is high. A typical parish may encompass only a few square kilometers and fewer than 1,000 people.

At the other extreme, Latin American parishes may encompass several hundred square kilometers and 5,000 people. The more dispersed Latin American distribution is attributable partly to a lower population density than in Europe. Because Roman Catholicism is a hierarchical religion, individual parishes must work closely with centrally located officials concerning rituals and procedures. If Latin America followed the European model of small parishes, many would be too remote for the priest to communicate with others in the hierarchy. The less intensive network of Roman Catholic institutions also results in part from colonial traditions, for both Portuguese and Spanish rulers discouraged parish development in Latin America.

The Roman Catholic population is growing rapidly in the U.S. Southwest and suburbs of some large North American and European cities. Some of these areas have a low density of parishes and dioceses compared to the population, so the Church must adjust its territorial organization. New local administrative units can be created, although funds to provide the desired number of churches, schools, and other religious structures might be scarce. Conversely, the Roman Catholic population is declining in inner cities and rural areas. Maintaining services in these areas is expensive, but the process of combining parishes and closing schools is very difficult.

Latter-Day Saints. Among other Christian religions, Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) exercise strong organization of the landscape. The territory occupied by Mormons, primarily Utah and portions of surrounding states, is organized into *wards*, with populations of approximately 750 each. Several wards are combined into a *stake* of approximately 5,000 population. The highest authority in the Church—the board and president—frequently redraws ward and stake boundaries in rapidly growing areas to reflect the ideal population standards.

Locally Autonomous Religions

Some universalizing religions are highly **autonomous religions**, or self-sufficient, and interaction among communities is confined to little more than loose cooperation and shared ideas. Islam and some Protestant denominations are good examples.

Local Autonomy in Islam. Among the three large universalizing religions, Islam provides the most local autonomy. Like other locally autonomous religions, Islam has neither a religious hierarchy nor a formal territorial organization. A mosque is a place for public ceremony, and a leader calls the faithful to prayer, but everyone is expected to participate equally in the rituals and is encouraged to pray privately.

In the absence of a hierarchy, the only formal organization of territory in Islam is through the coincidence of religious territory with secular states. Governments in some predominantly Islamic countries include in their bureaucracy people who administer Islamic institutions. These administrators interpret Islamic law and run welfare programs.

Strong unity within the Islamic world is maintained by a relatively high degree of communication and migration, such as the pilgrimage to Makkah. In addition, uniformity is fostered by Islamic doctrine, which offers more explicit commands than other religions.

Protestant Denominations. Protestant Christian denominations vary in geographic structure from extremely autonomous to somewhat hierarchical. Extremely autonomous denominations such as Baptists and United Church of Christ are organized into self-governing congregations. Each congregation establishes the precise form of worship and selects the leadership.

Presbyterian churches represent an intermediate degree of autonomy. Individual churches are united in a *presbytery*, several of which in turn are governed by a *synod*, with a *general assembly* as ultimate authority over all churches. Each Presbyterian church is governed by an elected board of directors with lay members. The Episcopalian, Lutheran, and most Methodist churches have hierarchical structures, somewhat comparable to the Roman Catholic Church.

Ethnic Religions. Judaism and Hinduism also have no centralized structure of religious control. To conduct a full service, Judaism merely requires the presence of 10 adult males. (Females count in some Jewish communities.) Hinduism is even more autonomous, because worship is usually done alone or with others in the household. Hindus share ideas primarily through undertaking pilgrimages and reading traditional writings.

KEY ISSUE 4

Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise Among Religious Groups?

- Religion versus government policies
- Religion versus religion

The twentieth century was a century of global conflict—two world wars during the first half of the century, the Cold War between supporters of democracy and Communism during the second half. With the end of the Cold War, the threat of global conflict has receded in the twenty-first century, but local conflicts have increased in areas of cultural diversity, as will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

The element of cultural diversity that has led to conflict in many localities is religion. Contributing to more intense religious conflict has been a resurgence of religious **fundamentalism**, which is a literal interpretation and a strict and intense adherence to basic principles of a religion (or a religious branch, denomination, or sect). In

a world increasingly dominated by a global culture and economy, religious fundamentalism is one of the most important ways that a group maintains a distinctive cultural identity.

As this section demonstrates, the attempt by very intense adherents of one religion to organize Earth's surface can conflict with the spatial expression of other religious or nonreligious ideas. A group convinced that their religious view is *the* correct one may spatially intrude upon the territory controlled by other religious groups. In addition, religious groups oppose government policies seen as promoting social change conflicting with traditional religious values. We will look at examples of each type of conflict.

Religion Versus Government Policies

The role of religion in organizing Earth's surface has diminished in some societies, owing to political and economic change. Islam has been particularly affected by a perceived conflict between religious values and modernization of the economy. Hinduism also has been forced to react to new nonreligious ideas from the West. Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam have all been challenged by Communist governments that diminish the importance of religion in society. Yet, in recent years, religious principles have become increasingly important in the political organization of countries, especially where a branch of Christianity or Islam is the prevailing religion.

Religion Versus Social Change

In less developed countries, participation in the global economy and culture can expose local residents to values and beliefs originating in more developed countries of North America and Western Europe. North Americans and Western Europeans may not view economic development as incompatible with religious values, but many religious adherents in less developed countries do, especially where Christianity is not the predominant religion.

Taliban Versus Western Values. When the Taliban gained power in Afghanistan in 1996, many Afghans welcomed them as preferable to the corrupt and brutal warlords who had been running the country. U.S. and other Western officials also welcomed them as strong defenders against a possible new invasion by Russia. The Taliban (which means "religious students") had run Islamic Knowledge Movement Religious schools, mosques, shrines, and other religious and social services since the seventh century A.D., shortly after the arrival of Islam in Afghanistan.

Once in control of Afghanistan's government in the late 1990s, the Taliban imposed very strict laws inspired by Islamic values as the Taliban interpreted them. The Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice enforced the laws. Men were beaten for shaving their beards and stoned for committing adultery. Homosexuals were buried alive, and prostitutes were hanged in front of large audiences. Thieves had their hands cut off, and women wearing nail polish had their fingers cut off.

Islamic scholars criticized the Taliban as poorly educated in Islamic law and history and for misreading the Koran. However, the Taliban believed that they had been called by Allah to purge Afghanistan of sin and violence and make it a pure Islamic state. They banned "Western, non-Islamic" leisure activities, such as playing music, flying kites, watching television, and surfing the Internet; and they converted soccer stadiums to settings for executions and floggings. Western values were not the only targets: enormous Buddhist statues as old as the second century A.D. were destroyed in 2001 because they were worshipped as "graven images" in violation of Islam.

Hinduism Versus Social Equality. Hinduism has been strongly challenged since the 1800s, when British colonial administrators introduced their social and moral concepts to India. The most vulnerable aspect of the Hindu religion was its rigid **caste** system, which was the class or distinct hereditary order into which a Hindu was assigned according to religious law. In Hinduism, because everyone was different, it was natural that each individual should belong to a particular caste or position in the social order.

The caste system apparently originated around 1500 B.C., when Aryans invaded India from the west. The Aryans divided themselves into four castes, which developed strong differences in social and economic position: Brahmans, the priests and top administrators; Kshatriyas, or warriors; Vaisyas, or merchants; and Shudras, or agricultural workers and artisans. The Shudras occupied a distinctly lower status than the other three castes. Over the centuries, these original castes split into thousands of subcastes.

The type of Hinduism practiced will depend in part on the individual's caste. A high-caste Brahman may practice a form of Hinduism based on knowledge of relatively obscure historical texts. At the other end of the caste system, a low-caste illiterate in a rural village may perform religious rituals without a highly developed set of written explanations for them.

Below the four castes were the outcasts, or untouchables, who did the work considered too dirty for other castes. In theory the untouchables were descended from the indigenous people who dwelled in India prior to the Aryan conquest. Until recently, social relations among the five groups were limited, and the rights of non-Brahmans, especially untouchables, were restricted.

British administrators and Christian missionaries pointed out the shortcomings of the caste system, such as neglect of the untouchables' health and economic problems. The rigid caste system has been considerably relaxed in recent years. The Indian government legally abolished the untouchable caste, and the people formerly in that caste now have equal rights with other Indians.

Religion Versus Communism

Organized religion was challenged in the twentieth century by the rise of communism in Eastern Europe and Asia. The three religions most affected were Eastern Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.

Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Islam Versus the Soviet Union. In 1721 Czar Peter the Great made the Russian Orthodox Church a part of the Russian government. The patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church was replaced by a 12-member committee, known as the Holy Synod, nominated by the czar.

Following the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, which overthrew the czar, the Communist government of the Soviet Union pursued antireligious programs. Karl Marx had called religion "the opium of the people," a view shared by V. I. Lenin and other early Communist leaders. Marxism became the official doctrine of the Soviet Union, so religious doctrine was a potential threat to the success of the revolution. People's religious beliefs could not be destroyed overnight, but the role of organized religion in Soviet life could be reduced, and was.

The Soviet government in 1918 eliminated the official church-state connection that Peter the Great had forged. All church buildings and property were nationalized and could be used only with local government permission. The Orthodox religion retained adherents in the Soviet Union, especially among the elderly, but younger people generally had little contact with the church beyond attending a service perhaps once a year. With religious organizations prevented from conducting social and cultural work, religion dwindled in daily life.

The end of Communist rule in the late twentieth century brought a religious revival in Eastern Europe, especially where Roman Catholicism is the most prevalent branch of Christianity, including Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Property confiscated by the Communist governments reverted to Church ownership, and attendance at church services increased.

In Central Asian countries that were former parts of the Soviet Union—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—most people are Muslims. These newly independent countries are struggling to determine the extent to which laws should be rewritten to conform to Islamic custom rather than to the secular tradition inherited from the Soviet Union.

Buddhism Versus Southeast Asian Countries. In Southeast Asia, Buddhists were hurt by the long Vietnam War—waged between the French and later by Americans, on one side and Communist groups on the other. Neither antagonist was particularly sympathetic to Buddhists. U.S. air raids in Laos and Cambodia destroyed many Buddhist shrines, whereas others were vandalized by Vietnamese and by the Khmer Rouge Cambodian Communists. On a number of occasions, Buddhists immolated (burned) themselves to protest policies of the South Vietnamese government.

The current Communist governments in Southeast Asia have discouraged religious activities and permitted monuments to decay, most notably the Angkor Wat complex in Cambodia, considered one of the world's most beautiful Buddhist structures. In any event, these countries do not have the funds necessary to restore the structures.

Religion Versus Religion

Refer back to the map of world religions (Figure 6–1), near the beginning of this chapter. Conflicts are most likely to occur where colors change, indicating a boundary between two religious groups. Two long-standing conflicts involving religious groups are in the Middle East and Northern Ireland.

Religious Wars in the Middle East

Conflict in the Middle East is among the world's longest standing and most intractable. Jews, Christians, and Muslims have fought for 2,000 years to control the same small strip of land in the Eastern Mediterranean. To some extent the hostility among Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Middle East stems from their similar heritage. All three groups trace their origins to Abraham in the Old Testament narrative, but the religions diverged in ways that have made it difficult for them to share the same territory.

As an ethnic religion, Judaism makes a special claim to the territory it calls the Promised Land. The major events in the development of Judaism took place there, and the religion's customs and rituals acquired meaning from the agricultural life of the ancient Hebrew tribe. After the Romans gained control of the area, which they called the province of Palestine, they dispersed the Jews from Palestine, and only a handful were permitted to live in the region until the twentieth century.

Islam replaced Christianity as the most widely practiced religion in Palistine after the Muslium army conquered it in the seventh century A.D. Christians consider Palestine the Holy Land and Jerusalem the Holy City because the major events in Jesus's life, death, and Resurrection were concentrated there. Most inhabitants of Palestine accepted Christianity, after the religion was officially adopted by the Roman Empire.

Muslims regard Jerusalem as their third holiest city, after Makkah and Madinah, because it is the place from which Muhammad is thought to have ascended to heaven. (See Figure 6–14 and Global Forces, Local Impacts box.)

Crusades Between Christians and Muslims. In the seventh century, Muslims, now also called Arabs, because they came from the Arabian peninsula, captured most of the Middle East, including Palestine and Jerusalem. The Arab army diffused the Arabic language across the

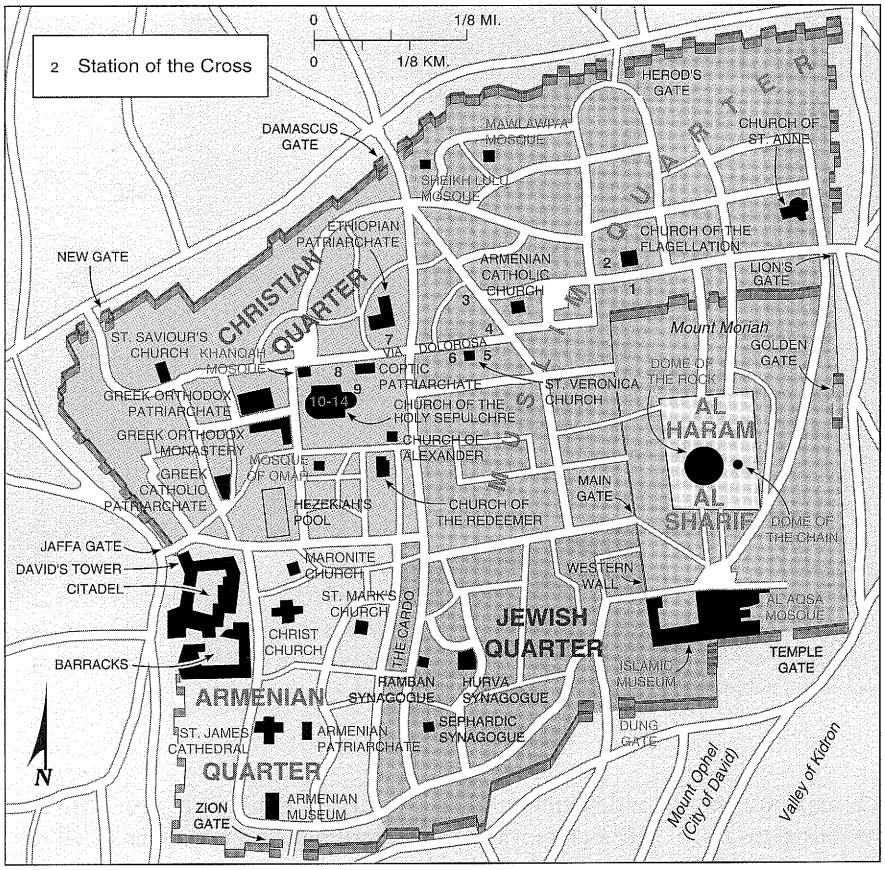


FIGURE 6–14 *Jerusalem. The Old City of Jerusalem contains holy places for three religions. The flattened hill on the eastern side of the Old City is the site of two structures holy to Muslims, the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque, both of which were built on the site of ancient Jewish temples. The west side of the Old City contains the most important Christian shrines, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Jesus is thought to have been buried.*

Middle East and converted most of the people from Christianity to Islam.

The Arab army moved west across North Africa and invaded Europe at Gibraltar in A.D. 710 (see Figure 6–6). The army conquered most of the Iberian Peninsula, crossed the Pyrenees Mountains a few years later, and for a time occupied much of present-day France. Its initial advance in Europe was halted by the Franks (a West

Global Forces, Local Impacts

Jerusalem: Contested Geography

The geography of Jerusalem makes it difficult if not impossible to settle the long-standing religious conflicts. The difficulty is that the most sacred space in Jerusalem for Muslims was literally built on top of the most sacred space for Jews.

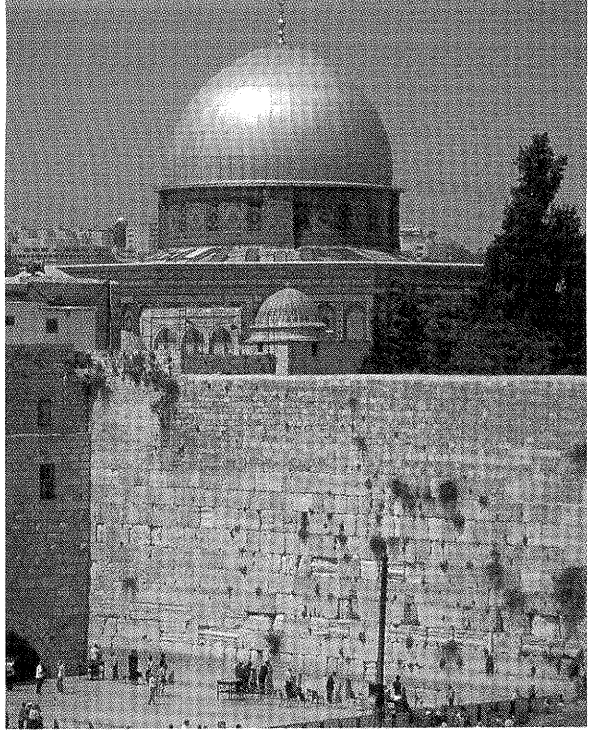
Jerusalem is especially holy to Jews as the location of the Temple, their center of worship in ancient times. The First Temple, built by King Solomon approximately 1000 B.C., was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. A few years later, when the Persian Empire, led by Cyrus the Great, gained control of Jerusalem, Jews were allowed to build a Second Temple. The Romans destroyed the Jewish Second Temple in A.D. 70. The Western Wall of the Temple survives.

The most important Muslim structure in Jerusalem is the Dome of the Rock, built in A.D. 691. Muslims believe that the large rock beneath the building's dome is the place from which Muhammad ascended to heaven, as well as the altar on which Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. Immediately to the south of the Dome of the Rock is the al-Aqsa Mosque.

The challenge facing Jews and Muslims is that al-Aqsa Mosque was built on the site of the ruins of the Jewish Second Temple. Thus, the surviving Western Wall of the Jewish Temple is situated immediately beneath the holy Muslim structures.

Christians and Muslims call the Western Wall the Wailing Wall, because for many centuries Jews were allowed to visit the surviving Western Wall only once a year to lament the Temple's destruction. After Israel captured the entire city of Jerusalem during the 1967 Six-Day War, it removed the barriers that had prevented Jews from visiting and living in the Old City of Jerusalem, including the Western Wall. The Western Wall soon became a site for daily prayers by observant Jews.

Israel allows Muslims unlimited access to that religion's holy structures in Jerusalem and some control over them. Ramps and passages patroled by Palestinian guards provide Muslims access to the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque without having to walk in front of the Western Wall where Jews are praying. However, because the holy Muslims structures sit literally on top of the holy Jewish structure, the two sets of holy structures cannot be logically divided by a line on a map.



Jews pray in front of the Western Wall in Jerusalem (right). The wall is the only remaining portion of the Second Temple, which was destroyed in A.D. 70. For hundreds of years, Jews were allowed to visit the site only once a year. Jews are still restricted from visiting the rest of the temple site because it is occupied by structures holy to Muslims, including the Dome of the Rock (left), where Muhammad is thought to have ascended to heaven.

Germanic people), led by Charles Martel, at Poitiers, France, in A.D. 732. The Arab army made further gains in Europe in subsequent years and continued to control portions of present-day Spain until 1492, but Martel's victory ensured that Christianity rather than Islam would be Europe's dominant religion.

To the east, the Arab army captured Eastern Orthodox Christianity's most important city, Constantinople (present-day Istanbul in Turkey), in 1453 and advanced a few years later into Southeast Europe, as far north as present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. The current civil war in that country is a legacy of the fifteenth-century Muslim invasion.

To recapture the Holy Land from its Muslim conquerors, European Christians launched a series of military campaigns, known as Crusades, over a 150-year period. Crusaders captured Jerusalem from the Muslims in 1099 during the First Crusade, lost it in 1187 (which led to the Third Crusade), regained it in 1229 as part of a treaty ending the Sixth Crusade, and lost it again in 1244.

Jews Versus Muslims in Palestine. The Muslim Ottoman Empire controlled Palestine for most of the two centuries between 1516 and 1917. Upon the empire's defeat in World War I, Great Britain took over Palestine under a mandate from the League of Nations, and later from the United Nations. For a few years the British allowed some Jews to return to Palestine, but immigration was restricted again during the 1930s in response to intense pressure by Arabs in the region.

As violence initiated by both Jewish and Muslim settlers escalated after World War II, the British announced their intention to withdraw from Palestine. The United Nations voted to partition Palestine into two independent states, one Jewish and one Muslim. Jerusalem was to be an international city, open to all religions, and run by the United Nations.

When the British withdrew in 1948, Jews declared an independent state of Israel within the boundaries prescribed by the U.N. resolution. The next day its neighboring Arab Muslim states declared war. The combatants signed an armistice in 1949 that divided control of Jerusalem. The Old City of Jerusalem, which contained the famous religious shrines, became part of the Muslim country of Jordan. The newer, western portion of Jerusalem became part of Israel, but Jews were still not allowed to visit the historic shrines in the Old City.

Israel won three more wars with its neighbors, in 1956, 1967, and 1973. Especially important was the 1967 Six-Day War, when Israel captured territory from its neighbors. From Jordan, Israel captured the West Bank (the territory west of the Jordan River taken by Jordan in the 1948–49 war). From Jordan, Israel also gained control of the entire city of Jerusalem, including the Old City. From Syria, Israel acquired the Golan Heights. From Egypt came the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula (Figure 6–15).

Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt, and in return Egypt recognized Israel's right to exist. Egypt's President Anwar Sadat and Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed a peace treaty including these terms in 1979, following a series of meetings with U.S. President Jimmy Carter at Camp David, Maryland. Sadat was assassinated by Egyptian soldiers, who were extremist Muslims opposed to compromising with Israel, but his successor Hosni Mubarek carried out the terms of the treaty. Four decades after the Six-Day War, the status of the other territories occupied by Israel still has not been settled.

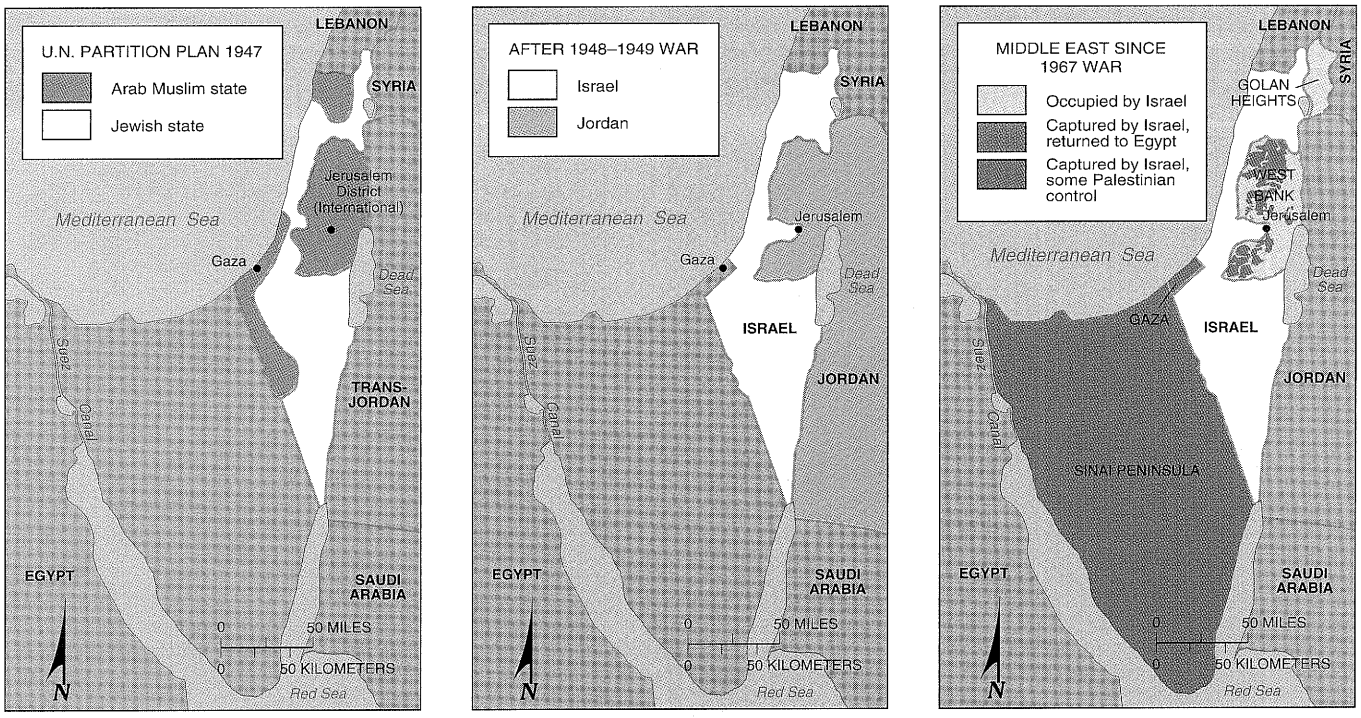


FIGURE 6–15 *Boundary changes in Palestine/Israel. (Left) The 1947 United Nations plan to partition Palestine. The plan was to create two countries, with the boundaries drawn to separate the predominantly Jewish areas from the predominantly Arab Muslim areas. Jerusalem was intended to be an international city, run by the United Nations. (Center) Israel after the 1948–49 War. The day after Israel declared its independence, several neighboring states began a war, which ended in an armistice. Israel's boundaries were extended beyond the UN partition to include the western suburbs of Jerusalem. Jordan gained control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, including the Old City, where holy places are clustered. (Right) The Middle East since the 1967 War. Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria, the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan, and the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt. Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt in 1979 and Gaza and a portion of the West Bank to the Palestinians in 1994. Israel still controls the Golan Heights, most of the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.*

Conflict over the Holy Land: Palestinian Perspectives. After the 1973 war, the Palestinians emerged as Israel's principal opponent. Egypt and Jordan renounced their claims to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, respectively, and recognized the Palestinians as the legitimate rulers of these territories. The Palestinians in turn also saw themselves as the legitimate rulers of Israel.

Five groups of people consider themselves Palestinians:

- people living in the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem territories captured by Israel in 1967;
- citizens of Israel who are Muslims rather than Jews;
- people who fled from Israel to other countries after the 1948–49 war;
- people who fled from the West Bank or Gaza to other countries after the 1967 war;
- citizens of other countries, especially Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia, who identify themselves as Palestinians.

After capturing the West Bank from Jordan in 1967, Israel permitted Jewish settlers to construct more than 100 settlements in the territory (Figure 6–16, left). Some Israelis built settlements in the West Bank because they regarded the territory as an integral part of the biblical Jewish homeland, known as Judea and Samaria. Others migrated to the settlements because of a shortage of affordable housing inside Israel's pre-1967 borders. Although Jewish settlers comprise only about 7 percent of the West Bank population, Palestinians see their immigration as a hostile act. To protect the settlers Israel has military control over most of the West Bank.

The Palestinian fight against Israel has been coordinated by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under the longtime leadership of Yassir Arafat. Israel has permitted the organization of a limited form of government in much of the West Bank and Gaza, called the Palestinien Authority, but Palestinians are not satisfied with either the amount or territory or the amount of power granted to them by Israel. Some Palestinians are willing to settle for all of the territory taken by Israel in the 1967 War, including the Old City of Jerusalem, whereas others want to continue fighting Israel for the entire territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

Conflict over the Holy Land: Israeli Perspective. Israel sees itself as a very small country—20,000 square kilometers (8,000 square miles)—with a Jewish majority, surrounded by a region of hostile Muslim Arabs encompassing more than 25 million square kilometers (10 million square miles). In dealing with its neighbors, Israel considers two elements of the local landscape especially meaningful.

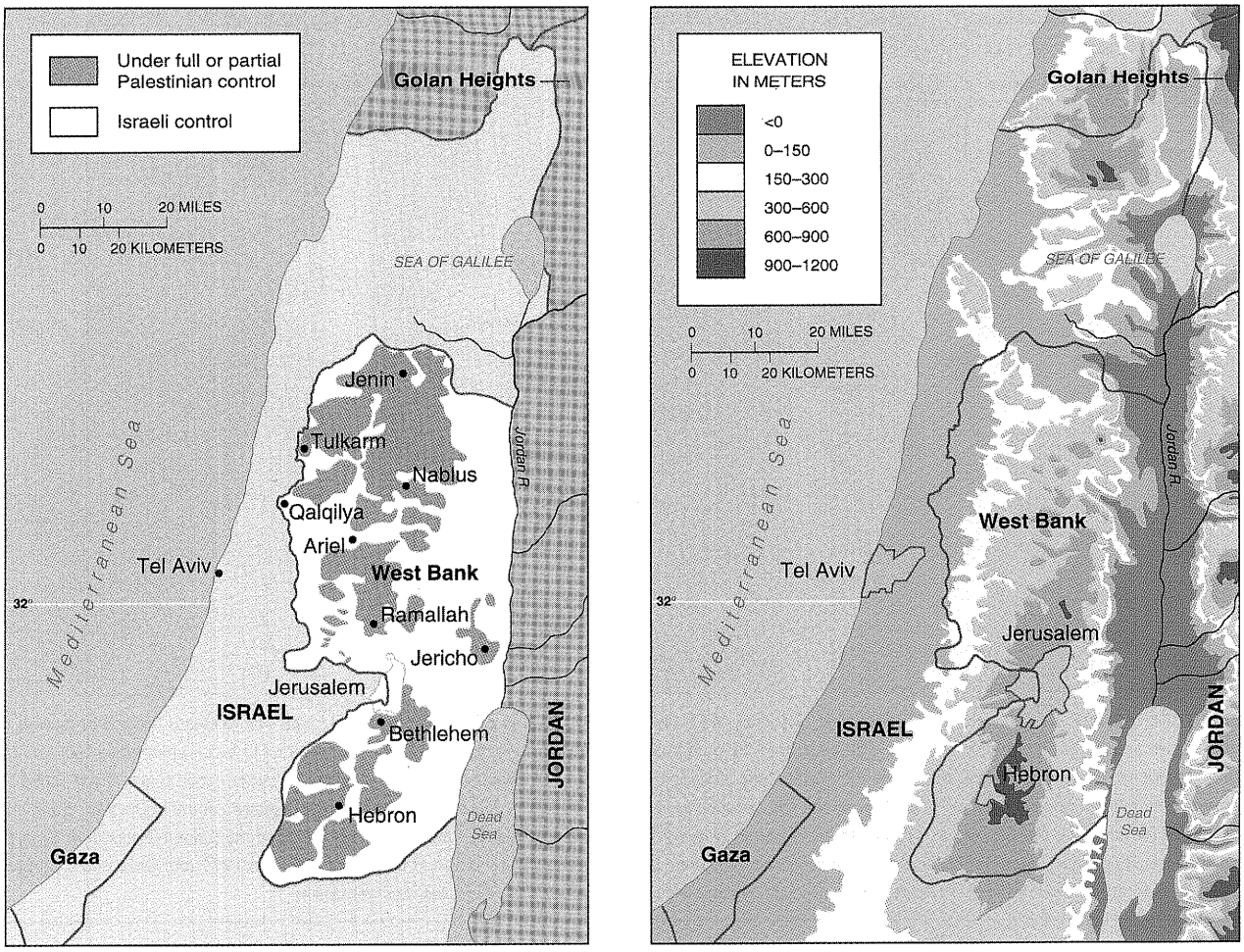


FIGURE 6–16 *(Left) Since Israel captured the West Bank in 1967, Jewish settlers have constructed more than 100 settlements in the territory. More than 50,000 Jews now live in the West Bank, about 7 percent of the territory's total population. (Right) Physical geography of Israel and West Bank. The land between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River is divided into three roughly parallel physical regions: a narrow coastal plain along the Mediterranean, a series of hills reaching elevations above 1,000 meters (3,300 feet), and the Jordan River valley. Between 1948 and 1967 Israel's boundaries encompassed primarily the coastal lowlands, whereas Jordan and Syria controlled the highlands. During the 1967 War, Israel captured these highlands and retained them to stop attacks on population concentrations in the Jordan River valley and the coastal plain.*

First, the country's major population centers are quite close to international borders, making them vulnerable to surprise attack. The country's two largest cities, Tel Aviv and Haifa, are only 20 and 60 kilometers (12 and 37 miles), respectively, from Palestinian-controlled territory, while the third-largest city, Jerusalem, is adjacent to the border.

The second geographical problem from Israel's perspective derives from local landforms. The northern half of Israel is a strip of land 80 kilometers (50 miles) wide between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River. It is divided into three roughly parallel physical regions (Figure 6–16, right):

- a coastal plain along the Mediterranean, extending inland as much as 25 kilometers (15 miles) and as little as a few meters;
- a series of hills reaching elevations above 1,000 meters (3,300 feet);
- the Jordan River valley, much of which is below sea level.

The United Nations plan for the partition of Palestine in 1947, as modified by the armistice ending the 1948–49 War, allocated most of the coastal plain to Israel, whereas Jordan took most of the hills between the coastal plain and the Jordan River valley, a region generally called the West Bank (of the Jordan River). Farther north, Israel's territory extended eastward to the Jordan River valley, but Syria controlled the highlands east of the valley, known as the Golan Heights.

Jordan and Syria used the hills between 1948 and 1967 as staging areas to attack Israeli settlements on the adjacent coastal plain and in the Jordan River valley. Israel captured these highlands during the 1967 War to stop attacks on the lowland population concentrations. Israel still has military control over the Golan Heights and West Bank a generation later, yet attacks by Palestinians

CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIC TOOLS

Pinpointing a Border in the Middle East

Israel established a 1,000-square-kilometer (400-square-mile) "security zone" in the southern part of Lebanon in 1982 to prevent Hezbollah and other militant Muslim groups from attacking settlements in northern Israel (Figure 6-1.1). When Israel announced that it would withdraw from the security zone in 2000, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) agreed to place several thousand troops near the border. But before deploying the troops, UNIFIL required confirmation that every Israeli soldier had pulled back to Israel's side of the border. To further discourage attacks from Lebanon, Israel prepared to build a high-tech fence with motion sensors on its side of the border.

To certify that every Israeli soldier was on the Israeli side of the border, UNIFIL needed to know precisely where the border was located. United Nations' staff cartographers were called in to answer the question. First they were asked to "identify a line to be adopted conforming to internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon based on the best available cartographic and other documentary evidence." Then they would "identify physically on the ground portions of the line necessary or relevant to confirming the withdrawal of Israeli forces."

The Lebanese government stated that the border should match as closely as possible the line established by the League of Nations in 1923. The League of Nations had given France a mandate to govern Syria, which then included Lebanon, and Britain a mandate to govern Palestine, which included present-day Israel.

What was expected to be a purely technical exercise of locating the border actually required the geographers to make many delicate decisions and judgments in a volatile region of the world. UN cartographers consulted the yellowed maps from the League of Nations, but placing the 1923 borders on the present-day map of the Middle East was not a straightforward operation.

For one thing, after Israel's 1948–49 War of Independence, Israel and Lebanon set a cease-fire line that was near the 1923 border but not precisely the same. Then, after invading Lebanon in 1982, Israel adjusted the border for military purposes—for example, to include a hilltop inside Israel rather than leave the border at a low point.

Even more of a challenge for UN geographers was reconciling the description of the 1923 border to the current physical landscape. The 80-kilometer (50-mile) border runs through rugged terrain, from sea level at the Mediterranean coast on the west to the foothills of the Golan Heights at 3,000-foot elevation on the east. Geographers consulted current and past air photos and satellite images to place physical features on the appropriate side of the border. But after three-quarters of a century, the region's physical landmarks had been altered: hills had been plowed away, stream courses altered, ponds drained and expanded, forests cut down and planted.

Ultimately, UN cartographers successfully drew the border through fieldwork on both sides rather than by relying solely on old maps and satellite imagery. It made no sense for the cartographers to divide a village near the border between the two countries, to slice back yards of houses built since 1949, or to place stone and paint in the middle of fields and orchards.

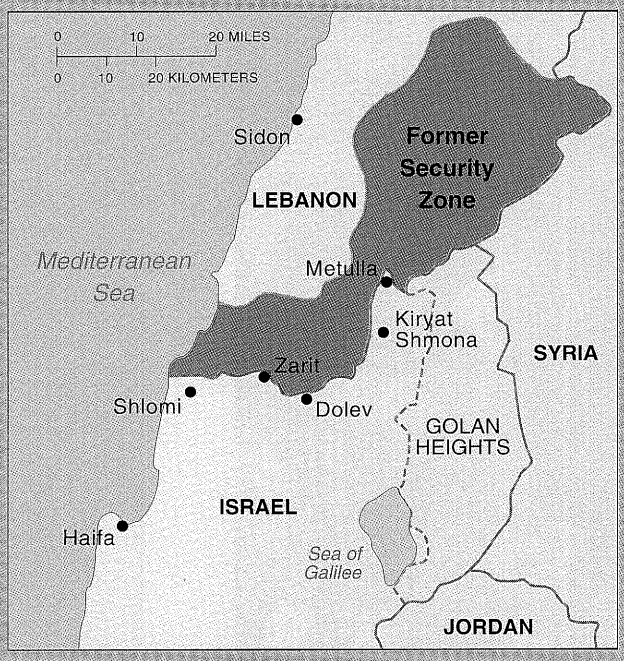


FIGURE 6-1.1 *Former Security Zone in Lebanon. When Israel withdrew from Lebanon, the United Nations was brought in to demarcate the boundary between Lebanon and Israel.*

against Israeli citizens have continued. Israeli Jews are divided between those who wish to retain some of the occupied territories and those who wish to make compromises with the Palestinians.

The ultimate obstacle to comprehensive peace in the Middle East is the status of Jerusalem. As long as any one religion—Jewish, Muslim, or Christian—maintains exclusive political control over Jerusalem, the other religious groups will not be satisfied. But Israelis have no intention of giving up control of the Old City of Jerusalem, and Palestinians have no intention of giving up their claim to it.

Religious Wars in Ireland

The most troublesome religious boundary in Western Europe lies on the island of Eire (Ireland). The Republic of Ireland, which occupies five-sixths of the island, is 92 percent Roman Catholic, but the island's northern one-sixth, which is part of the United Kingdom rather than Ireland, is about 58 percent Protestant and 42 percent Roman Catholic (Figure 6–17).

The entire island was an English colony for many centuries and was made part of the United Kingdom in 1801. Agitation for independence from Britain increased in Ireland during the nineteenth century, especially after poor economic conditions and famine in the 1840s led to mass emigration, as described in Chapter 3. Following a succession of bloody confrontations, Ireland became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire in 1921. Complete independence was declared in 1937, and a republic was created in 1949.

When most of Ireland became independent, a majority in six northern counties voted to remain in the United Kingdom. Protestants, who comprised the majority in Northern Ireland, preferred to be part of the predominantly Protestant United Kingdom rather than join the predominantly Roman Catholic Republic of Ireland.

Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland have been victimized by discriminatory practices, such as exclusion from higher-paying jobs and better schools. Demonstrations by Roman Catholics protesting discrimination began in 1968. Since then, more than 3,000 have been killed in Northern Ireland—both Protestants and Roman Catholics—in a never-ending cycle of demonstrations and protests.

A small number of Roman Catholics in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a militant organization dedicated to achieving Irish national unity by whatever means available, including violence. Similarly, a scattering of Protestants created extremist organizations to fight the IRA,

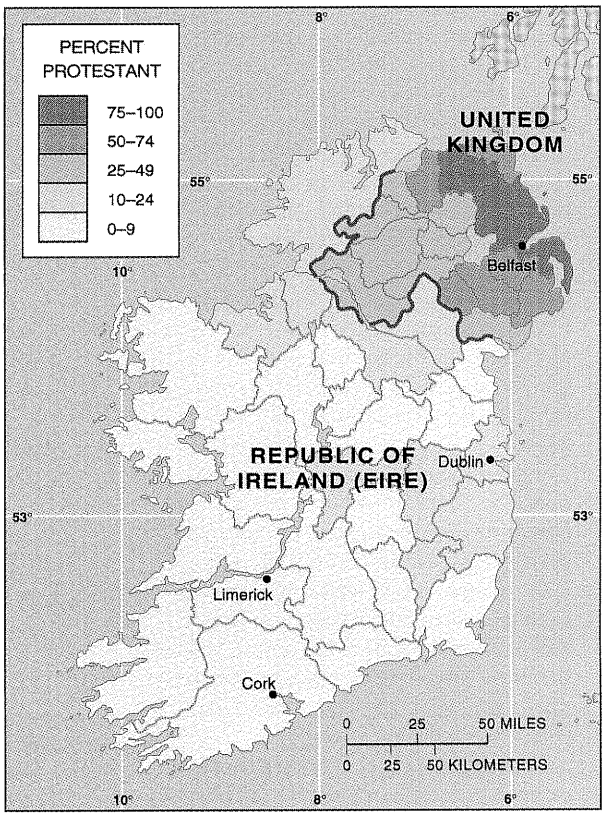


FIGURE 6–17 *(Left) Northern Ireland. Demonstrators rally to protest violence in Belfast, August 2002. (Right) Distribution of Protestants in Ireland, 1911. Long a colony of England, Ireland became a self-governing dominion within the British Empire in 1921. In 1937, it became a completely independent country, but 26 districts in the north of Ireland chose to remain part of the United Kingdom. The Republic of Ireland today is more than 95 percent Roman Catholic, whereas Northern Ireland has a Protestant majority. The boundary between Roman Catholics and Protestants does not coincide precisely with the international border, so Northern Ireland includes some communities that are predominantly Roman Catholic. This is the root of a religious conflict that continues today.*

including the Ulster Defense Force (UDF). Although the overwhelming majority of Northern Ireland's Roman Catholics and Protestants are willing to live peacefully with the other religious group, extremists disrupt daily life for everyone. As long as most Protestants are firmly committed to remaining in the United Kingdom and most Roman Catholics are equally committed to union with the Republic of Ireland, peaceful settlement appears difficult. Peace agreements implemented in 1999 provided for sharing of power, but the British government has suspended the arrangement several times because of violations.

SUMMARY

North Americans pride themselves on tolerance of religious diversity. Most North Americans are Christian, but they practice Christianity in many ways, including Roman Catholicism, many denominations of Protestantism, and other Christian faiths. In addition to 265 million Christians, North America is also home to 6 million Jews, 5 million Muslims, 3 million Buddhists, and 1 million Hindus. The freedom to establish a religion is a protected right.

The religious landscape looks different outside North America. One-third of the world's people are Christian, but that leaves two-thirds who are not. Around the world, people care deeply about their religion and are willing to fight other religious groups and governments to protect their right to worship as they choose. The growth of Islam in Europe and of Christianity in Africa show that the religious landscape can change through migration and conversion.

Almost all religions preach a doctrine of peace and love, yet religion has been at the center of conflicts throughout history. For geographers, religion represents a critical factor in explaining cultural differences among locations, as well as interrelationships between the environment and culture. Given the importance of religion to people everywhere, geographers are sensitive to the importance of accurately understanding global similarities and local diversity among religions.

The key issues of this chapter demonstrate the impact of religion on the cultural landscape. Here again are the key issues for Chapter 6:

1. **Where are religions distributed?** The world has three large universalizing religions: Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, each of which is divided into branches and denominations. Hinduism is the largest ethnic religion.
2. **Why do religions have different distributions?** A universalizing religion has a known origin and clear patterns of diffusion, whereas ethnic religions typically have unknown origins and little diffusion. Holy places and holidays in a universalizing religion are related to events in the life of its founder or prophet and related to the local physical geography in an ethnic religion. Some religions encourage pilgrimages to holy places.
3. **Why do religions organize space in distinctive patterns?** Some religions have elaborate places of worship. 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. Some but not all universalizing religions organize their territory into a rigid administrative structure to disseminate religious doctrine.
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.

CASE STUDY REVISITED

Future of Buddhism in Tibet

When the Dalai Lama dies, Tibetan Buddhists believe that his spirit enters the body of a child. In 1937 a group of priests located and recognized a two-year-old child named Tenzin Gyatso as the fourteenth Dalai Lama, the incarnation of the deceased thirteenth Dalai Lama, Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. The child was brought to Lhasa in 1939 when he was four and enthroned a year later. Priests trained the young Dalai Lama to assume leadership and sent him to college when he was 16.

Daily life in Tibet was traditionally dominated by Buddhist rites. As recently as the 1950s, one-fourth of all males were monks, and polygamy was encouraged among other males to produce enough children to prevent the population from declining.

After taking control of Tibet in 1950, the Chinese Communists sought to reduce the domination of Buddhist monks in the country's daily life by destroying monasteries and temples. Farmers were required to join agricultural communes unsuitable for their nomadic style of raising livestock, especially yaks.

In recent years the Chinese have built new roads and power plants to help raise the low standard of living in Tibet. The Chinese argue that they have brought modern conveniences to Tibet, including paved roads, hospitals, schools, and agricultural practices. Some monasteries have been rebuilt, but no new

monks are being trained. Tibet has been given a small degree of autonomy to operate local government.

The Dalai Lama has become an articulate spokesperson for religious freedom, and in 1989 he was awarded the world's most prestigious award for peace, the Nobel Prize. Despite the efforts of the Dalai Lama and other Buddhists, though, when the current generation of priests dies, many Buddhist traditions in Tibet may be lost forever.

KEY TERMS

Animism (p. 194)
Autonomous religion (p. 212)
Branch (p. 187)
Caste (p. 213)
Cosmogony (p. 204)
Denomination (p. 187)
Diocese (p. 211)
Ethnic religion (p. 212)
Fundamentalism (p. 212)
Ghetto (p. 201)
Hierarchical religion (p. 211)
Missionary (p. 197)
Monotheism (p. 194)
Pagan (p. 197)
Pilgrimage (p. 201)
Polytheism (p. 194)
Sect (p. 187)
Solstice (p. 206)
Universalizing religion (p. 187)

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

1. 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?
2. People carry their religious beliefs with them when they migrate. Over time, change occurs in the regions from which most U.S. immigrants originate and in the U.S. regions where they settle. How has the distribution of U.S. religious groups been affected by these changes?
3. To what extent have increased interest in religion and ability to practice religious rites served as forces for unification in Eastern Europe and the countries that formerly were part of the Soviet Union? Has the growing role of religion in the region fostered political instability? Explain.
4. Why does Islam seem strange and threatening to some people in predominantly Christian countries? To what extent is this attitude shaped by knowledge of the teachings of Muhammad and the Quran, and to what extent is it based on lack of knowledge of the religion?
5. 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 evangelical activities equally likely to occur at any time and at any place, or are some places more suited than others? Why?

ON THE INTERNET

Our cyberspace exercises for Chapter 6 (**www.prenhall.com/rubenstein**) explore the rise and fall of universalizing religions, as well as religious spatial distributions, and more. In the Short Essay, for example, we examine the Islamic time line for clues about the relationship between Islam and Spain, whereas our Reviewing Concepts essay investigates various religious rituals, including music, sociability, and censure. Our GeoSearch and Destinations sections offer you the opportunity to explore key terms in depth through Internet search engines that provide examples of how these terms are used. We also provide you with a very short and easy tutorial on how to conduct successful Boolean searches, as well as Internet destinations that offer differing perspectives from which to formulate answers to our cyberspace questions.

Statistics on number of adherents to religions and main branches can be controversial. An authoritative nondenominational source of statistical information is maintained on the Web at **www.adherents.com.** Statistics are provided by religion and by location. The site also notes when different sources sharply disagree about the numbers. A second authoritative Web source is the Encyclopaedia Britannica's Year in Review (**www.eb.com**).

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