

CHAPTER 7

Historical and Contemporary Processes of Diffusion

Topics 3.5–3.8

Topic 3.5 Historical Causes of Diffusion

Learning Objective: Explain how historical processes impact current cultural patterns. (SPS-3.A)

Topic 3.6 Contemporary Causes of Diffusion

Learning Objective: Explain how historical processes impact current cultural patterns. (SPS-3.A)

Topic 3.7 Diffusion of Religion and Language

Learning Objective: Explain what factors led to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions. (IMP-3.B)

Topic 3.8 Effects of Diffusion

Learning Objective: Explain how the process of diffusion results in changes to the cultural landscape. (SPS-3.B)

In 1979, [schools on the Navajo reservation had about] 80 percent of students speaking Navajo – ten years later, 5 percent. There's just too much English influence to really be effective in keeping our language. [If the Navajo language is lost] we will not be a unique people. We will have no culture; we will have no prayers.

—Marilyn Begay, 5th grade teacher, The Navajo Language Immersion School, Navajo Nation reservation, Arizona



A bilingual stop sign in Quebec, Canada. (See Topic 3.7 for more about cultural landscape.)

Historical Causes of Diffusion

Essential Question: How do historical processes impact current cultural patterns?

Today, few formal colonies remain in the world, but the practices left behind by the European powers are present in their former colonies. The afternoon break for tea, a British tradition, is still practiced in Kenya and India. Christianity and the legacy of colonial languages are still widespread in many former colonies.

Influences of Colonialism, Imperialism, and Trade

Colonialism, imperialism, and trade have played a powerful role in spreading religion and culture. Historians often divide European colonialism into two separate waves. From the 16th through the 18th centuries, Europeans colonized the Americas and South Asia. Then, during the next two centuries, European powers expanded colonization into most of Africa, Southwest Asia, and other coastal regions of East and Southeast Asia.

Imperialism and colonialism are related ideas, but they are not the same. **Imperialism** is a broader concept that includes a variety of ways of influencing another country or group of people by direct conquest, economic control, or cultural dominance. **Colonialism** is a particular type of imperialism in which people move into and settle on the land of another country. Examples of imperialism and colonialism can be found throughout history and all over the world, but modern European imperialism and colonialism are the most relevant to the current political map because they strongly influenced the diffusion of language and religion.

European colonizers imposed their cultural traits on the local populations. For example, before European colonization, most religions practiced by the native indigenous people of Africa and North America were forms of **animism**, the belief that non-living objects, such as rivers or mountains, possess spirits. Europeans forced many of their colonial subjects to adopt the Christian faith. The Spanish and French spread Roman Catholicism throughout Latin America and North America. The English and Dutch spread forms of Protestantism in their North American colonies.

Diffusion of Languages

Languages commonly spread through both relocation and expansion diffusion. As people migrated and colonized to new locations, they brought their culture and language with them via relocation diffusion. Additionally, via political

control a colonial language would be imposed hierarchically as the language of trade, business, and politics. People wanting to benefit financially would connect to these networks of power and influence by learning and speaking colonial languages resulting in an expansion of language. Some languages spread over wide areas of the world and often follow a mixture of types of diffusion. The major globalized languages of the world—English, French, Spanish, and Arabic—spread from their hearths largely because of conquest and colonialism. In the case of Arabic, its use as the standard religious language in Islam contributed to its success and facilitated an expansion of adherents.

Widely Diffused Languages Trade has aided the spread of languages because ships, railroads, and other forms of transportation built and strengthened connections between places. Trade, conquest, and colonialism have so widely spread some languages that more people speak it outside its hearth than within it. For example, the largest population of speakers of Portuguese are in Brazil, not Portugal. The same is true for English, Spanish, and French—the highest population of speakers for each of those languages are not in the hearth.

MOST SPOKEN LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD IN ORDER OF TOTAL SPEAKERS			
Language	Language Hearth	Total Population of Hearth 2019	Total Speakers Worldwide 2019 (native and second language)
English	England	55 million	Over 1.5 billion
Mandarin (Chinese)	China	1.4 billion	Over 1.2 billion
Hindi	India	1.3 billion	Over 615 million
Spanish	Spain	47 million	Over 570 million
French	France	67 million	Over 300 million
Arabic	Arabian Peninsula	78 million	Over 270 million

Chart appears in order of total speakers worldwide. Which languages have not diffused extensively from their hearth? What are reasons why they did not diffuse widely?

Limited Diffusion of Manadrin Some languages have never diffused widely. Mandarin Chinese, though the second-most commonly spoken language in the world, did not spread globally. China has been among the most powerful and innovative countries in the world for much of the past 2,000 years, and its merchants settled in various parts of Asia and locations in the Pacific Ocean. Yet China never established colonies outside of Asia and, as a result, Chinese speakers have always been concentrated in China and port cities in Asia.

Mandarin does have the most **native speakers**, those who use the language learned from birth, with over 900 million native speakers. The Chinese government wants to increase the number of Mandarin speakers and has been using government policies and its economic influence to encourage the use of Mandarin throughout Asia and across the world.

English as a Lingua Franca

Unlike Chinese, English has a wide spatial distribution. English is the most widely used language in the world, with over 1.5 billion speakers. Native speakers (380 million) are concentrated in lands colonized by Great Britain such as the United States, Canada, South Africa, India, and Australia.

However, most speakers of English do not use it as their primary language. Rather, they use it as a **lingua franca**, a common language used by people who do not share the same native language. For example, Nigerians commonly speak one of 500 indigenous languages at home, but they learn English to communicate with everyone who does not speak their language. Globalization and new technology explain why English is often used as a lingua franca:

- U.S. and British multinational corporations made English the common language for international business.
- Scientists and other scholars, airline pilots, and journalists have used English to communicate with others across the globe.
- English evolved as the lingua franca of the Internet and is widely used in social media.
- English is often spoken by actors in television shows and movies which are shown around the world.

The wide use of English has made communication among people around the world easier. However, it has also sparked resentment in some who feel that the intrusion of American English language and western culture delegitimizes their own unique linguistic and cultural practices.

Creating New Words and Languages

Many new words begin as **slang**, words used informally by a segment of the population. As the world has become more globalized, certain words have spread dramatically and their meaning has changed. For example, the word *brunch* was slang before it became standard. Slang used in video gaming chats such as “w00t,” to express excitement or victory, has diffused to common language today as woot.

Pidgin Languages

When speakers of two different languages have extensive contact with each other, often because of trade, they sometimes develop a **pidgin language**, a simplified mixture of two languages. A pidgin language has fewer grammar rules and a smaller vocabulary than either language but is not the native language of either group. In Papua New Guinea, the pidgin combines English and Papuan languages.

Creole Languages

Over time, two or more separate languages can mix and develop a more formal structure and vocabulary so that they are no longer a pidgin language. They create a new combined language, known as a **creole language**. Afrikaans is

a creole language spoken in South Africa that combines Dutch with several European and African languages.

On the islands of the Caribbean, creole languages are common. Africans captured and enslaved in the Americas between the 1500s and the 1800s were unable to transplant their languages. Stolen from their communities, they were forced onto ships with captives from various regions in Africa. With no common language among the groups of captives, communication was difficult. Most groups lost their languages after a generation in the Americas because of this linguistic isolation. Yet they were able to create creole languages by combining parts of their African languages with the European colonizers' languages of English, Spanish, French, or Portuguese.

The most widely used creole language in the Americas is found in Haiti. Haitian Creole is derived mostly from French with influences from numerous languages of West Africa. It has become an official language of Haiti and a source of national pride and cultural identity.

Swahili in East Africa

Another example of language mixing occurred in East Africa. As early as the 8th century, trade between Arab-speaking merchants and Bantu-speaking residents resulted in the development of Swahili. Swahili is estimated to be spoken by some 50 to 100 million people in Africa and is an official language of five African nations—Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Many proponents believe that using Swahili as the common language of Africa would help promote unity within the continent. They also feel it would help Africans overcome the legacy of colonialism. Using Swahili would help erase the notion that speaking European languages is prestigious and critical for advancement while using native languages is viewed as an obstacle to advancements in social, economic, and political spheres.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *How do historical processes impact current cultural patterns?*

Historical Processes That Have Shaped Culture	Resulting Cultural Patterns

KEY TERMS

imperialism	native speakers	pidgin language
colonialism	lingua franca	creole language
animism	slang	

Contemporary Causes of Diffusion

Essential Question: How do contemporary processes impact cultural patterns?

Cultural ideas and practices are socially constructed and change through both small-scale and large-scale processes such as urbanization and globalization. **Social constructs** are ideas, concepts, or perceptions that have been created and accepted by people in a society or social group and are not created by nature. These processes influence culture through media, technological change, politics, economics, and social relationships. In the past, technology has facilitated the spread of multiple languages. However, contemporary communication technologies have encouraged the use of fewer languages, especially English, Chinese, and Spanish. Globalization has further encouraged this phenomena because of the fundamental need for a lingua franca to communicate across cultures.

Communication Technologies

Communication technologies have allowed for the globalization of popular culture through multiple methods of spatial diffusion. Music, video games, TV shows, cars, and clothing are heavily influenced by mass media, the Internet, and traditional and online publishing.

Due to historical processes such as colonialism, conquest, and trade, the English language diffused around the world. More recent developments in the ease of use and access to many of these technologies have served to strengthen the use of American English around the world. The elite hierarchies, or most influential creators of popular or global culture, continue to concentrate in the usual major cities—New York City, Los Angeles, London, and Tokyo. Major news networks, publishers, and multinational corporations have driven popular culture creation over the last 75 years.

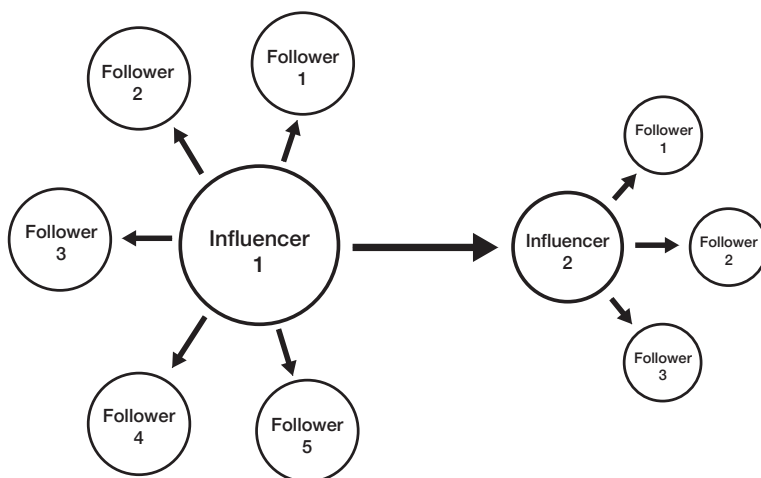
However, access to social media, search engines, and entertainment on the web is challenging traditional corporate sources of popular culture. The rise of social media allows for individuals or small groups of people to promote their own self-produced forms of entertainment (TikTok and YouTube, for example), eSports, fashion, and other products, creating influencers who challenge the status quo and how culture is created and diffused.

As a result of technological changes, the rate of diffusion has increased dramatically and the patterns of diffusion have taken on new and interesting forms. Social media at its heart is a form of expansion and contagious diffusion. However, hierarchical diffusion is shown via the connections that people have

with influencers and the vast networks of their followers. The hierarchical diffusion graphic below also illustrates a nodal, or functional regional pattern.

Technology can be a global equalizing force by helping to provide access to information and economic opportunity. However, if a person does not have access to the Internet, the world is still a very unequal place.

HIERARCHICAL DIFFUSION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS



The size of the circles indicates the number of followers. Arrows indicate sharing of information. Each follower would also have their own network of connection. What could be added to this graphic/model to make it a more complete representation of how diffusion works on the Internet and social media? Defend your response with evidence or examples.

Time-Space Convergence

The greater interconnection between places that results from improvements in transportation is called **time-space convergence**. It often makes places less culturally distinct. For example, in 1492 it took Christopher Columbus 36 days to cross the Atlantic Ocean on a wind-powered ship. By 1907, that time was reduced to 4.5 days due to the invention of the steam engine. Modern commercial aviation replaced ocean liners as the dominant mode of transatlantic transportation. A commercial airplane makes the transatlantic journey from Europe to North America in about 7 hours. Modern communication technologies have caused a similar change in the amount of time needed for information to travel.

Time-space convergence provides another way of thinking about geography as not just physical space but also of relative distance. While transportation and communication changes do not actually “shrink” the earth, the time and cost of movement between places have greatly decreased, making the earth feel smaller. This demonstrates how a person’s sense of time and space vary based upon cultural, economic, and social factors.

Cultural Convergence and Divergence

As the relative distance between places shrinks, the interactions among cultures increases. Some argue that globalization is resulting in **cultural convergence**—cultures are becoming similar to each other and sharing more cultural traits, ideas, and beliefs. This cultural homogenization, or becoming more alike, is a concern for many societies and is met with resistance by some people. (See Topic 3.8.) These interactions often result in cultural change. For example, people around the world wear jeans and t-shirts on a daily basis and are less likely to wear the traditional clothing of their ancestors or parents. In many instances, cultural convergence can cause indigenous or traditional cultures and languages to become extinct.

Occasionally, people use new technologies and social media to help preserve local or threatened languages. Technology is used to record and preserve languages that could become extinct in the face of cultural convergence. Communities of speakers use social media to discuss and share their cultural beliefs and language with other members of the community who are separated from or have left an area. That increases the likelihood of preservation of some elements of language and culture.

Cultural divergence is the idea that a culture may change over time as the elements of distance, time, physical separation, and modern technology create divisions and changes. A culture’s isolation because of absorbing barriers of physical geography, such as mountains, oceans, or distance, can halt diffusion. The longer a group is isolated, the more slowly its culture will change or diverge from the original culture. Today, most barriers are permeable, which means that part of an idea or trait may reach a cultural group but usually not enough to rapidly change the entire culture. As new ideas seep into the culture, the pace and changes can occur more quickly, especially if a person moves away from their home and into a city or new region.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: How do contemporary processes impact cultural patterns?

Methods of Contemporary Diffusion	How Methods Diffuse Culture

KEY TERMS

social constructs	cultural convergence
time-space convergence	cultural divergence

Diffusion of Religion and Language

Essential Question: What factors lead to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions?

The Navajo, a Native American group of the Southwest United States, face many of the same problems as indigenous people across the world—the loss of their native language and culture in the context of globalization. Currently there are approximately 7,000 languages that people around the world speak. But by the end of the century, about half of those languages will be gone. Most of the languages are spoken by small, isolated groups. As these groups become integrated into the larger society, the people often learn the language of the majority. The traditional language falls into disuse and becomes extinct. Since language is the key element in communication, with this loss of the language comes a loss of a central part of a group's history, ethnicity, and cultural identity.

Relationships Among Languages

As the Navajo example illustrates, language is essential to a group's culture. It creates a sense of place and a cultural landscape. The Navajos' experience shows that today's communication technologies are reshaping cultures and bringing drastic changes to languages. Some of these changes can contribute to destroying age-old practices and languages.

Yet language, like all elements of culture, has always been changing. The earliest languages spread from their culture hearths and faced a multitude of local, international, and global forces. These global forces include conquest, colonialism, imperialism, trade, and the widespread instant communication of the present day.

Origins of Language

Currently, **linguists**, scientists who study languages, have differing theories as to when humans first began communicating through spoken sounds. Some claim first communication began as recently as tens of thousands of years ago to as long ago as a few hundred thousand years. They are also unsure how language diffused:

- Was it through the dispersion of people, who carried language with them as they spread across the planet?
- Was it through transmission, as people learned language from their neighbors?
- Was it through conquest, with one people imposing language on others?

Language Families

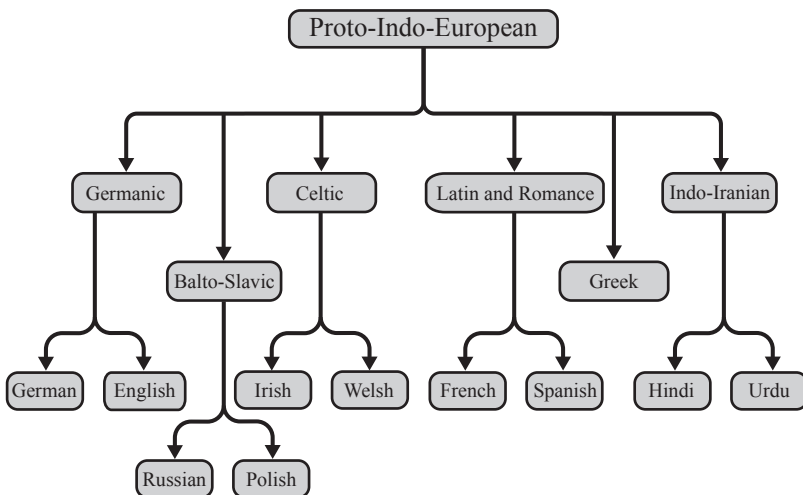
Linguists also are uncertain whether all languages descended from one original language. They do agree that nearly all of the languages spoken today can be grouped into about 15 language families. The relationship among these language families is often shown on a **language tree** because it suggests how several languages are related to each other, as well as how one language grows out of another.

The distribution of languages reflects human migrations. For example, the migration of Huns from central Asia to central Europe around 1,500 years ago explains why the languages most like Hungarian are found nearly 3,000 miles east of Hungary.

Indo-European Languages

One of the 15 major language families is the **Indo-European language family**, a large group of languages that might have descended from a language spoken around 6,000 years ago. Nearly half of the world's population speaks one of the languages of the Indo-European language family. This family includes about 2.8 billion native speakers of between 400 and 500 languages.

EXAMPLES OF INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES



The British Isles were settled by waves of Germanic speaking peoples over millennia. In 1066 French was introduced to the islands when England was conquered by William the Conqueror of Normandy.

One of the branches of the Indo-European language tree is Latin, and its history shows the difficulties in the study of language. Languages are challenging to study because they constantly evolve as people move away from the languages' cultural hearths, have contact with other languages, or are isolated from other languages.

Two thousand years ago, when the Roman Empire dominated much of what is present-day Europe, people there spoke Latin. However, as the empire dissolved, starting in the 5th century, transportation became more dangerous and trade declined. As a result, Latin speakers became geographically isolated from each other. The unifying language of Latin diverged into dozens of distinct regional languages, known as **Romance languages**. Most of these later vanished, but Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, and Romanian, among others survived and grew. The historical connection among these languages is evident in their similar words.

LATIN WORDS RELATED TO WORDS IN OTHER LANGUAGES					
Latin (meaning in English)	Pater (father)	Mater (mother)	Panis (bread)	Lupus (wolf)	Die (day)
Portuguese	Pai	Mae	Pao	Lobo	Dia
Spanish	Padre	Madre	Pan	Lobo	Dia
French	Pere	Mere	Pain	Loup	Jour
Italian	Padre	Madre	Pane	Lupo	Giorno
Romanian	Tata	Mama	Paine	Lup	Zi

What patterns of similarity do you notice between words in each of the Latin-based languages? What does this tell us about the different languages’ development?

Note that English words such as *father* and *mother* are similar to Latin words, but words such as *bread* and *wolf* are not. This suggests that English is not a direct descendant of Latin. English evolved from a Germanic language but has been heavily influenced by Romance languages such as French.

Accents and Dialects

Languages can be further divided into smaller categories by other traits. One is by accent, how words sound when pronounced. Accents often reflect social class or geographic region. The boundaries between variations in pronunciations or word usage are called **isoglosses**. For example, as you move from east to west in Texas, the term “dry creek bed” used near Dallas is replaced by the Spanish word “arroyo.” This isogloss represents the boundary between southern dialect and a Texan variation.

Variations in accent, grammar, usage, and spelling create **dialects**, or regional variations of a language. Variations between dialects are large enough that most speakers notice them, but small enough that speakers can understand each other easily. Often, the dialect spoken by the most influential group in a country is considered the standard, and others are modifications of it. “Hello, everyone” is standard. “Hi, y’all” and “Hi, you guys” are dialectical variations.

Dialects often include distinct **adages**, or sayings that attempt to express a truth about life, such as “the early bird gets the worm.” Additionally, dialects are geographic and create formal regions of a country or the world. Within dialects

are subdialects. For example, in the United States, a native of Texas is likely to speak a different dialect than a native of New York City.

Often, dialects are the legacy of differences in the past, but they can also be a first step in the evolution of a new language. Just as the Romance languages emerged as regional variations of Latin, new languages are developing today. For example, if the differences between British English and American English increased so much that speakers could not easily communicate with each other, the two would be classified as different languages instead of dialects of one.

The following chart shows differences between two dialects of English—American and British.

DIALECTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH AND BRITISH ENGLISH		
Category	American English	British English
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Elevator▪ Apartment▪ Parking lot▪ Trunk (of a car)▪ Gas (for a car)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lift▪ Flat▪ Car park▪ Boot▪ Petrol
Pronunciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lieutenant (loo-TEN-uhnt)▪ Schedule (SKED-juhl)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Lieutenant (lef-TEN-uhnt)▪ Schedule (SCHEDZH-uhl)
Spelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Meter▪ Color▪ Tire▪ Center▪ Theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Metre▪ Colour▪ Tyre▪ Centre▪ Theatre
Common Phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ "I'm tired."▪ "I'll call you."	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ "I'm knackered."▪ "I'll ring you."

Language Policies and Cultural Landscape

Language is important to a group's cultural identity. Because a culture occupies a certain spatial area, its language becomes intertwined with that place and its landscape. For example, native Hawaiians, whose economy relies on fishing, have five dozen words for fishing nets. In addition, signs can create a cultural landscape as they reflect the people's linguistic heritage and tie them to that place—from the single-language signs in France to bilingual signs in places such as Belgium, Quebec, or Wales.

Toponyms

Toponyms, or the names of places (see Topic 1.4), can provide insights into the physical geography, the history, or the culture of a location or region. Closely reviewing maps or listening to how people in a region refer to specific places helps geographers gain insight into the historical, cultural, ethnic, religious, and linguistic story of a location. For example, in 657 B.C.E., the Greeks founded a

colony that they named Byzantium, after a leader named Byzas. When the city fell under Roman control, it was remained Constantinople, after the Roman emperor Constantine. When the Turks seized the city in 1453, they started to call it Istanbul, which means “to the city.” Geographers look for clues as to why a place may have multiple names depending on who you ask and the point in history.

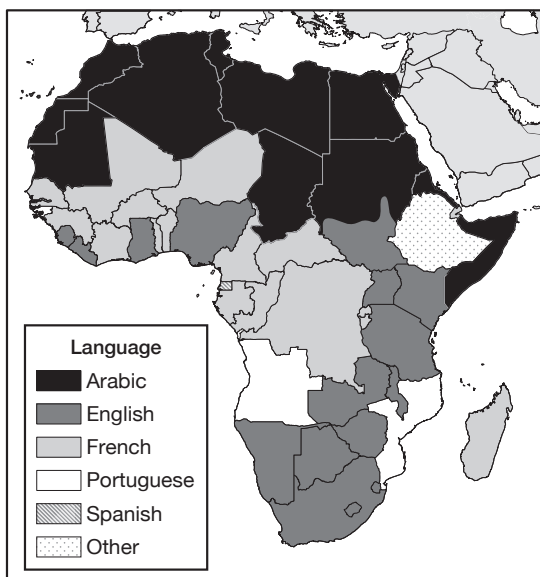
Official Languages

While the United States does not have an **official language**, one designated by law to be the language of government, some countries do. These countries can be grouped into three categories:

- Some countries are **homogeneous**, or made up largely of ethnically similar people, such as in Iceland, Japan, or Slovenia.
- Some countries use language to discourage people from maintaining a traditional culture. English colonizers did this in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales to promote quick assimilation.
- Some countries include several large ethnic groups. These countries want to honor all groups equally. For example, Zimbabwe is home to several large ethnic groups, so it has 16 official languages. People use English as a lingua franca to make communication easier.

English is the most common official language in the world with 64 countries, followed by French (32), Arabic (27), Spanish (23), and Portuguese (10). Official language does not necessarily mean the most spoken language in a country.

EXAMPLES OF OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN AFRICA



The map above represents some but not all official languages in Africa. Using the map describe the distribution pattern of each language shown. What does Ethiopia having an “Other” language tell you about its political history?

Ethnic and Universalizing Religious

Religion is intertwined with all other aspects of history and geography because, compared to other aspects of culture, it is relatively resistant to decay over time and distance. For example, descendants of immigrants often adopt a new language but continue to practice the faith of their ancestors and remain **adherents**, or believers in their faith. Developing strong mental maps of the origins, diffusion, and distribution of major religions and their divisions is one of the most valuable ways to understand culture.

Ethnic religions are belief traditions that emphasize strong cultural characteristics among their followers. In most cases, adherents of an ethnic religion are born or adopted into it. Members have a shared historical experience or struggle that creates strong bonds. Ethnic religions rarely recruit new followers actively. Rather, they spread as a result of relocation diffusion. Hinduism and Judaism are the world's two most widespread ethnic religions. The Jewish Diaspora and global migration of Hindus from India are examples of such relocation diffusion.

In contrast to an ethnic religion, a **universal religion** actively seeks converts to its faith regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. Universalizing religions are open to all people regardless of their ethnicity, language, social status or nationality. The major universalizing religions of the world are Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Sikhism is also considered universalizing but has a much more limited geographic diffusion. Universalizing religions have spread far from their original hearths because existing members feel a mandate to spread their beliefs to others. To carry out this mandate, members of universalizing religions often serve as missionaries who both perform charitable works and convert non-believers.

Eastern Religions

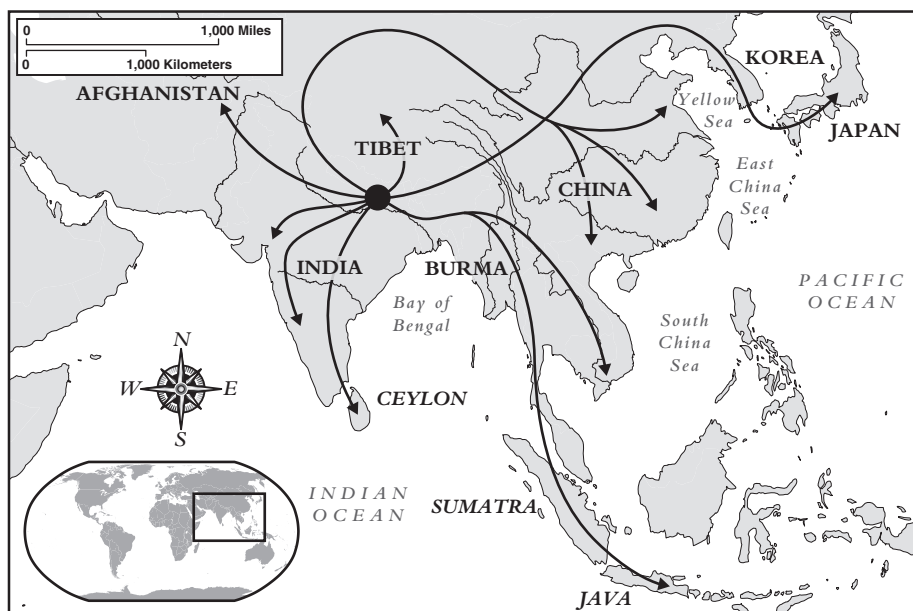
Several belief systems have developed in Asia. Of these, two developed in India and have diffused to other places from there.

Hinduism Classified as an ethnic religion, Hinduism includes the worship of many deities, so most scholars consider it **polytheistic**, which means having many gods. However, Hindus consider all deities as manifestations of one god, so it can be considered **monotheistic**, which means having one god. Hindus believe in **karma**—the idea that behaviors have consequences in the present life or a future life—and in **dharma**—which means the righteous path. For part of its history, Hinduism worked closely with a **caste system**, a rigid class structure, that shaped Indian society. The concept of reincarnation or rebirth based on the quality of life a person lived is a central belief of most Hindus. A soul would spiritually advance enough to become liberated from this cycle of death and rebirth. Rivers are considered sacred and symbolic of life and purification of sin.

Buddhism Buddhism grew out of the teachings of a prince named Siddhartha who lived around 600 B.C.E. Accepting many beliefs of Hinduism but rejecting the caste system, Siddhartha became known as the Buddha, or

“enlightened one.” According to Buddhist traditions, Siddhartha had been meditating for several days underneath a bodhi tree when he finally understood the cause of suffering and how to end it. Buddhist doctrines became summarized in the Four Noble Truths, which sought to eliminate desire and suffering by following the Eightfold Path. Siddhartha advised followers to escape the cycle of suffering through “right” views, hopes, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and meditation. This path requires an individual to meditate, reflect, and refrain from excessive earthly pleasures. The goal is, over time, to achieve enlightenment and the peaceful bliss known as nirvana, which would end the cycle of reincarnation.

THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM



The hearth and diffusion routes of Buddhism

Sikhism A relatively new universalizing monotheistic faith, Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in the Punjab region that crosses the border of India and Pakistan during the 16th century. Most Sikhs live on the Indian side of the border and enjoy more religious freedom than those of other religions in the area. The faith stresses serving others, honesty, hard work, and generosity rather than rituals. All men who are baptized add the name Singh (lion) and women add the name Kaur (princess). This practice was adopted to break down the influence of family names and the caste system in India in order to create a more equal society. A Sikh's place of worship is called a **gurdwara** and followers usually attend a service once a week. All gurdwaras have a worship gathering space and contain a food kitchen that serves meals to people of all faiths. The most holy place is the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Sikh pilgrim at the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) in Amritsar, India

Middle Eastern Religions

Three major religions trace their history to Abraham. He was a religious leader who lived in the Middle East around 1800 B.C.E.

Judaism Judaism was among the first monotheistic faiths. Jews believe that the writing known as the Torah expresses divine will. It is supplemented by other writings as well as unwritten laws and customs. For the past 2,000 years, most Jews lived in Europe and North Africa. Always a small minority, they often suffered persecution. In the late 1800s, Jews searching for religious liberty began efforts to establish a homeland in the Middle East and began their migration to the United States. During World War II, the systematic murder of six million Jews by Nazi Germany, an event known as the Holocaust, strengthened the movement to create a predominantly Jewish state in the Middle East. In 1948, the country of Israel was formed. Jews from around the world migrated there.

Christianity Christianity began when followers of a Jewish teacher, Jesus (c. 4 B.C.E. to c. 30 C.E.), evolved into their own religion based on the belief that Jesus was the son of God and the savior of humans. He emphasized the importance of faith, love, and peace. Christianity spread outward from the Middle East to become the dominant religion in Europe, and then to America and other parts of the world.

There are three main branches of Christianity—Roman Catholic, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox—with hundreds of further subdivisions. Strong patterns associated with language help to explain in part the geographic distribution of both religion and language. Many Catholics trace their heritage or colonial history to regions that spoke Romance languages such as French, Spanish, or

Portuguese. Protestants often have a similar history with northern European and Germanic languages like English. And many eastern European countries have a complex religious history related to a mix of Eastern Orthodox, Judaism, and Islam. While Christianity diffused primarily west, north, and east from its hearth in Israel, in one unique case it diffused south. In Ethiopia, Christianity attracted many adherents.

Islam Islam is the religion followed by Muslims. Muslims believe that Allah—the Arabic word for God—revealed his teachings to humans through a series of prophets. The last of these was Muhammad, who lived in what is now Saudi Arabia in the 6th and 7th centuries C.E.

Muslims believe that Allah communicated his teachings to Muhammad, who shared them with people in the book of holy writings known as the Quran. The core principles of the Quran became known as the Five Pillars of Islam:

- belief in one god—Allah
- ritual prayer
- almsgiving (giving of wealth or volunteering for charitable causes)
- fasting (abstaining from food or drink)
- pilgrimage to Mecca

Muslims evolved a law code based on the Quran, called sharia, to regulate religious and civic behavior. Sharia made no distinction between religious and civil law and countries that operate under it are considered theocracies. (See Topic 3.3.)

The two major subdivisions of Islam are the Sunni (90 percent of adherents) and Shia (10 percent of adherents). Countries with the highest Shia populations are Iran, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, and other countries in the Middle East and Africa.

Diffusion and Pilgrimage The two largest universalizing religions are Christianity and Islam. Each spread from their hearths partially through conquest and colonization.

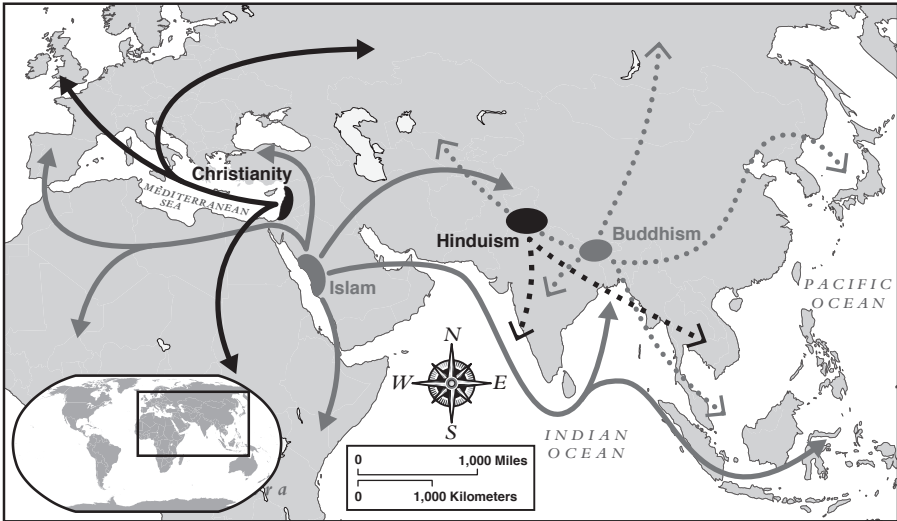
Christianity, which was found mostly in Europe in the 15th century, added millions of followers when Christian missionaries accompanied European explorers and conquerors to the Western Hemisphere, southern Africa, and Australia. As Europeans expanded their empires, they converted people to Christianity, sometimes forcefully.

Islam spread in much the same way, through the Middle East, North Africa, and Asia. Today, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world based on natural increase.

In many faith traditions, followers feel called to go on a **pilgrimage**, a religious journey taken by a person to a sacred place of his or her religion. Each year, over 20 million Hindus journey to the Ganges River, millions of Muslims travel to Mecca (a pilgrimage known as a *hajj*), and many Muslims, Jews, and Christians visit Jerusalem's many holy sites.

RELIGIOUS HEARTHS AND DIFFUSION		
Religion (number of adherents)	Hearth	Type of Diffusion
Hinduism (1.1 billion)	Along Indus River in present-day Pakistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion diffusion across Indian subcontinent Relocation diffusion in recent decades to Europe and the United States
Buddhism (500 million)	South Asia in present-day Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contagious diffusion as teachings spread throughout East and Southeast Asia along land and water trading routes Relocation diffusion throughout the world
Sikhism (20 million)	Punjab (crosses border of India and Pakistan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contagious diffusion via conversion Relocation diffusion mostly within the former British Empire and the United States
Judaism (15 million)	Eastern Mediterranean and southwestern Asia; present-day Israel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocation diffusion throughout North Africa and Europe forced by the Romans beginning around 70 C.E. Relocation diffusion to the United States and other countries including return migration to Israel post-1948
Christianity (2.3 billion)	Eastern Mediterranean and southwestern Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contagious diffusion via conversion and missionaries through the Middle East, Europe, and Central Asia Hierarchical diffusion through conversion of rulers, who then forced their followers to adopt the faith Expansion and relocation diffusion throughout the world via imperialism and colonialism
Islam (1.8 billion)	Southwest Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contagious diffusion by trade and conquest to Spain, Africa, and much of Asia Relocation diffusion throughout the world

DIFFUSION OF RELIGIONS



The map above show the historical diffusion of the four largest religions. The map does not show the global spread of Christianity during the European Imperialism and Colonialism period.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *What factors led to the diffusion of universalizing and ethnic religions?*

Universalizing and Ethnic Religions

Types of Diffusion

KEY TERMS

linguists
language tree
Indo-European language family
Romance languages
isoglosses
dialects
adages
toponyms
official language
homogeneous
adherents
ethnic religions
universal religion

Hinduism
polytheistic
monotheistic
karma
caste system
Buddhism
Sikhism
gurdwara
Judaism
Christianity
Islam
pilgrimage

Effects of Diffusion

Essential Question: How does the process of diffusion change the cultural landscape?

Cultural diffusion changes the cultural landscape and can be a source of controversy. One assumption is that globalization would result in **homogenization** of cultures, or making people of different places more alike. Theories about the effects of homogenization include losses of indigenous languages, religious practices, unique architectural styles, artistic expression, etc. People in some places respond to globalization in ways quite different from those of people in other places. They adopt and adapt some practices into their local culture while rejecting other aspects.

Smartphones and texting provide a good example of local adaptations. Texters in different countries have developed different shortcuts to lessen the number of keystrokes or to express emotions. For example, someone in the United States might use :) to represent a smiling face, while a person in Korea would use ^^.

Contact Between Cultures

Diffusion describes the ways cultures spread. As they spread, they come into contact with other cultures. The interaction of cultures is one of the driving forces in human history, and it can have several types of results, ranging from a person fully adopting the culture to picking up several cultural traits to acquiring no traits.

Acculturation

Often, an ethnic or immigrant group moving to a new area adopts the values and practices of the larger group that has received them, while still maintaining valuable elements of their own culture. This is called **acculturation**. For example, in the 1880s, the Syndergaard family migrated from Denmark to the United States, settling in a Danish enclave in Iowa. The mother and father gave most of their ten children common Danish names, such as Inger and Niels. They commonly ate Danish foods, including spherical pancakes called *abelskivver*. Within three generations, their descendants still ate abelskivver, but they had names common in U.S. culture, such as Susan, Jim, and Dave.

Another example of acculturation occurs when children or families speak Spanish or another native language at home but at school or work, they speak English. Acculturation is one reason why so many immigrants are multilingual.

Assimilation

Unlike acculturation, **assimilation** happens when an ethnic group can no longer be distinguished from the receiving group. This often occurs as ethnic groups become more affluent and leave their ethnic areas. Complete assimilation rarely happens, though. Usually, the one trait that is retained the longest is religion. For example, the grandchildren of immigrants from India might no longer speak Hindi or eat traditional Indian cuisine daily, but they might still practice their Hindu faith. Commonly, the third and fourth generations of an ethnic group display a resurgence in ethnic pride by organizing festivals, learning their ethnic language, and revitalizing ethnic neighborhoods.

Syncretism

The fusion or blending of two distinctive cultural traits into a unique new hybrid trait is called **syncretism**. This process results in new practices, beliefs, innovations, and traits within a society and ultimately results in changes to culture. This process is most likely to occur when different cultures are in proximity to each other and can occur via immigration, marriage between two groups, conquest, or simple creativity. One example is the blending of American fast food with cuisine from another culture, such as Taco Bell or Panda Express. Another example is the blending of snow skiing with inspiration from skateboarding and surfing, resulting in snowboarding. Holidays, such as Christmas, are a blending of a German tradition (decorating a tree), a Turkish belief (St. Nick—Santa Claus), a Christian doctrine (birth of Jesus), and American commercialism.

Most religions and languages are modified or blended as groups of people interact and create new meanings and traditions that reflect elements of multiple cultures. Additionally, music styles are often syncretic. Contemporary hip-hop freestyle rapping was influenced by Black jazz musicians of the 1930s and 1940s. Their willingness to improvise and create new rhythmic beats freely while playing allowed creativity and expression of culture and emotion. Hip-hop rappers incorporated this jazz freestyle rhythm and on-the-fly rhyming into their stories and poetic songs to express their views of inner-city America.

Glocalization is a form of syncretism that involves the creation of products or services for the global market by adapting them to local cultures. An example would be how McDonald's created the McCafé idea of designer coffees and pastries to attract customers in France. This blended model of fast food and coffee was so successful it diffused back to the United States market.

Multiculturalism

Without full assimilation, most receiving societies, such as the United States, are characterized by **multiculturalism**, the coexistence of several cultures in one society with the ideal of all cultures being valued and worthy of study. A major idea of multiculturalism is that the interaction of cultures enriches the lives of all.

Foods commonly eaten in the United States demonstrate the benefits of multiculturalism. Many foods introduced by one specific cultural group became common in the diet of people of all cultural groups:

- Corn, tomatoes, and potatoes come from indigenous American groups.
- Peanuts were first grown in South America and rice was first grown in China, but both entered the North American diet by way of Africa.
- Bagels were first made by Jews in eastern Europe.

Nativism

However, coexistence of cultures can also bring conflicts, as people and groups with different values, beliefs, and customs often clash. Minority groups can face prejudice and discrimination. Refugees hoping to settle in the United States after fleeing Syria at the outbreak of the 2011 civil war faced opposition from Americans who feared that some refugees might be terrorists.

In some cases, the conflict between two cultures becomes harsh. **Nativist**, or anti-immigrant, attitudes may form among the cultural majority, sometimes bringing violence and government actions against the immigrant or minority group. Often, nativist attitudes are directed toward one particular group. For example, from the mid-1800s through the early 1900s, many native-born Protestants in the United state were strongly opposed to Roman Catholic immigrant from Ireland, Italy, Poland, and other countries. Mexican Americans and other immigrant from Spanish-speaking countries have often faced oppostion from nativist groups.

Other times, nativism reflects a general dislike of people from other countries, or xenophobia. A more contemporary example is the poor reception that Syrian refugees experienced in some European countries. Many Europeans feared the introduction of non-European languages, religions, and cultural practices of the largely Muslim Syrian refugee population.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *How does the process of diffusion change the cultural landscape?*

List of the Effects of Diffusion of Culture	Explanation of the Effects of Diffusion of Culture

KEY TERMS

homogenization	glocalization
acculturation	multiculturalism
assimilation	nativist
syncretism	

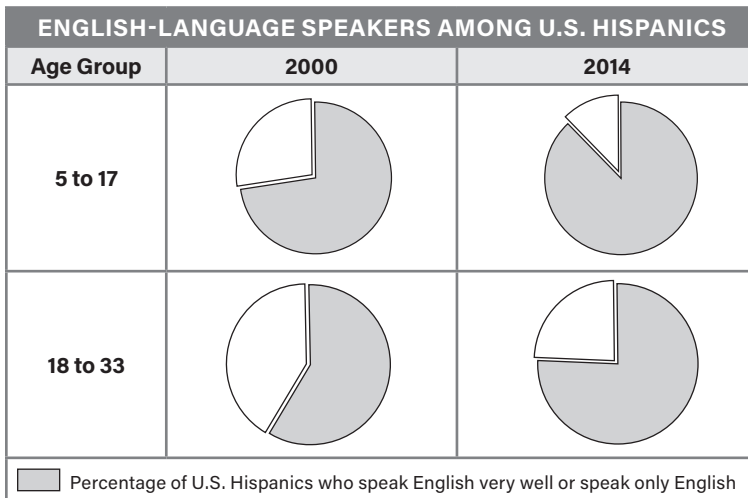


GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES: SPANISH AT VARIOUS SCALES

What defines the region of the United States where Spanish is widely spoken? Geographers answer this question using various tools, such as census data, surveys, and the cultural landscape. They have found that the Spanish-speaking region changes depending on the level of analysis.

Spanish at the Country and U.S. State Scale

The United States includes more than 41 million people who grew up speaking primarily Spanish, and another 11 million bilingual people. On a cartogram showing the total number of Spanish speakers in a country, the United States would be the second-largest country in the world; only Mexico would be larger.



Source: Pew Research Center of data from the 2014 American Community Survey and the 2000 Census (IPUMS).

At the state level, the answer is slightly more complex. States vary, generally according to history and relative location. States with the highest percentages of Spanish-speaking Americans were all once colonies of Spain and are located close to Latin America: California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Florida.

Spanish at the Local Scale

At the county level, the issue becomes even more complex. Large cities throughout the country have large populations of residents who speak Spanish as either a first or second language. The Chicago metropolitan area has more Spanish speakers than the entire populations of either New Mexico or Arizona. In addition, scattered counties around the country, from southern Idaho to eastern North Carolina, each have at least 7 percent of their population who speak Spanish.

1. Using the concept of scale, explain how the United States is labeled on a map as a majority English-speaking country but is still the country with the second-most Spanish speakers in the world.
2. What are trends related to the change in English-language speakers among Hispanics in the United States?



THINK AS A GEOGRAPHER: LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS IN NEW YORK

The connection between language and culture is often very close. However, it is often not identical. When immigrants come to the United States, they often lose their ancestral language but keep elements of their ancestral culture. The reverse can also occur: people might continue to worship in their traditional language, such as Arabic, Hebrew, or Greek, but also speak English, watch baseball, and eat apple pie.

New York City, a magnet for immigrants from around the world, includes native speakers of every major language. These speakers form networks among each other and with overseas communities. English and Spanish are widely spoken, but neighborhoods are often pockets of speakers of other languages. Look at the data in the chart below.

NEW YORK CITY LANGUAGES	
Language	Number of Speakers in New York City
English	3,700,000
Spanish	1,870,000
Chinese	419,000
South Asian Languages (Hindi, Urdu, and Others)	200,000
Russian	186,000
French Creole	106,000
Yiddish	85,000
French	81,000

1. Based on the languages spoken in other parts of the world, with which parts would New York City have the strongest network?
2. Explain how English creates a network in New York City by serving as a lingua franca.
3. What evidence would you look for in the cultural landscape to see whether you were in a neighborhood where a language other than English is widely used?

CHAPTER 7 REVIEW:

Historical and Contemporary Processes of Diffusion

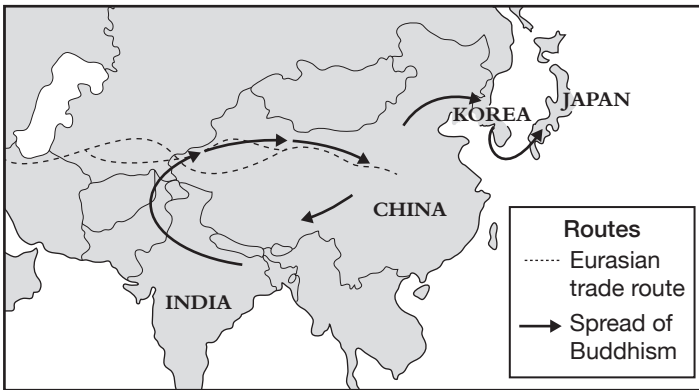
Topics 3.5–3.8

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Some countries have several official languages because they want to
 - (A) make international diplomacy easier
 - (B) foster political cooperation with neighboring countries
 - (C) make government operate more efficiently
 - (D) prepare students to participate in the global economy
 - (E) give recognition to different groups within the country
2. Which statement best describes the most common reason groups wish to preserve their traditional languages?
 - (A) Language is central to cultural identity, so preserving a language helps preserve a culture.
 - (B) Language is used in religious services, so preserving a language is primarily a religious obligation.
 - (C) Language is used for trade, so preserving language is one way to keep a group economically prosperous.
 - (D) Language change is a politically disruptive force, so preserving a language is one way to keep stability.
 - (E) Language preservation passes on a group's history, so preserving a language is the only way to record history accurately.
3. The Arabic language spread from its hearth and became one of the major global languages mainly through
 - (A) increased use of communication technology in Arab nations
 - (B) spread of Middle Eastern multinational oil corporations
 - (C) worldwide colonization beginning around 600 C.E.
 - (D) conquest and its use as a standard religious language
 - (E) resisting colonization by European nations and the United States

Question 4 refers to the map below.

DIFFUSION OF BUDDHISM OUT OF INDIA



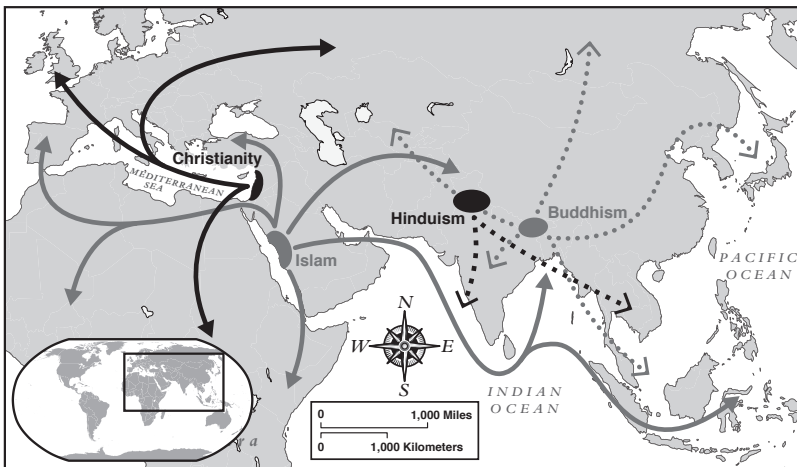
4. Which general conclusion about the expansion diffusion of the religion does the map most strongly support?
 - (A) It requires mass migrations of people over long distances.
 - (B) It usually moves in an eastward direction.
 - (C) It is aided by the presence of a major trade route.
 - (D) It occurs more in Asia than on other continents.
 - (E) It experiences strong fundamentalism at its hearth.
5. Which was the most common religious change among Africans as a result of contact with people from Europe and the Middle East?
 - (A) Animism to a universalizing religion
 - (B) An ethnic religion to animism
 - (C) A universalizing religion to an ethnic religion
 - (D) Monotheism to polytheism
 - (E) Polytheism to an ethnic religion
6. Which type of influence has been most significant in shaping the distribution of religious groups in the United States?
 - (A) Climate and landforms
 - (B) Immigration patterns
 - (C) Federal government policies
 - (D) Economic development
 - (E) Shifts in agriculture

7. Which of the following is NOT a factor that has encouraged globalization?
- (A) Technological advances in communication and transportation
 - (B) Increased business costs
 - (C) The quest for global markets associated with capitalism
 - (D) An increase in the flows of financial capital
 - (E) Governmental policies

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION

1. Two major religious hearths in the world are Southwest Asia and South Asia. Religions diffused from these regions to many others. Use the map below to answer the questions that follow.

THE DIFFUSION OF FOUR RELIGIONS



- (A) Identify ONE religion that originated in Southwest Asia and a country today where the majority of people follow the religion.
- (B) Identify ONE religion that originated in South Asia and a country in the world today where the majority of people follow the religion.
- (C) Describe the difference between universalizing and ethnic religions.
- (D) Explain how hierarchical diffusion helped the spread of Christianity.
- (E) Describe how relocation diffusion explains the spread of either Hinduism or Judaism.
- (F) Identify the scale of analysis of the map shown and describe ONE limitation of the map.
- (G) Describe ONE specific way that when a religion diffuses to a new area it can change the cultural landscape.

UNIT 3 REVIEW:

Connecting Course Skills and Content

APPLYING GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS

Applying geographic skills is critical for success on the AP® Exam. For each skill listed, write a one-paragraph response that illustrates your understanding of it. Support your response with specific examples and evidence. Refer to the Unit 1 introduction (pages 3–7) for tips on how to apply geographic skills.

- 1C** Compare and contrast the three types of expansion diffusion.
- 2A** Describe the spatial patterns, networks, and relationships of a major language and religion.
- 3E** Using the data table in Topic 3.5, describe the geographic processes that explain why Spain’s population (47 million) differs from the number of Spanish-speaking people worldwide (570 million).
- 4A** Using three visual images from Unit 3, identify different types of information presented in each source.
- 5B** Explain how a location’s cultural region (language, religion etc.) can change depending on the scale of analysis. Cite at least three levels of scale to support your response.



WRITE AS A GEOGRAPHER: WRITE IN COMPLETE THOUGHTS

A response to a free-response question should be more than just a list of unrelated points. Each point should be stated clearly in one or more sentences that each express a complete thought. Related sentences should be linked with words such as “for example,” “as a result,” and “in the next stage” that make the relationship between ideas clear. Together, all of the sentences should work together to form a larger complete thought that answers the question.

For each word, write one or two sentences that demonstrate how that word might be used in answering a free-response question about categories of religion.

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. monotheistic | 3. fundamentalism | 5. universal |
| 2. polytheistic | 4. ethnic | 6. theocracies |

Write a sentence that includes each pair of words or phrases and states a clear relationship between the concepts.

- 7. Jewish Diaspora; relocation diffusion
- 8. sharia; religious law
- 9. universalizing religions; members feel a mandate
- 10. Mecca, Jerusalem, Lhasa (Tibet); sacred space