

Chapter 06

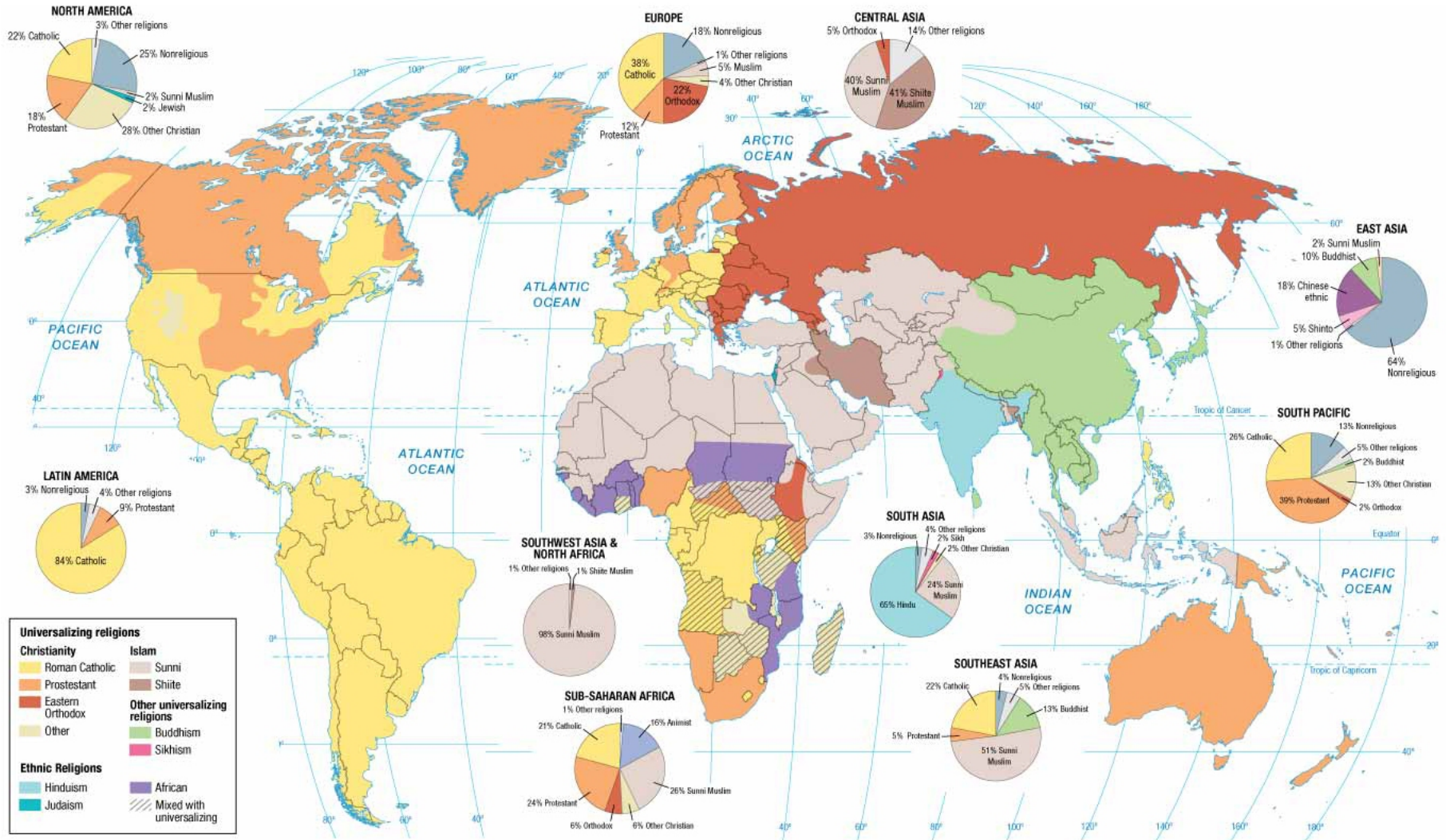
Religions

Chapter 06

Key Issue 1:

Where are Religions Distributed?

World Distribution of Religions



Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Distribution of Religions

- Geographers distinguish **two types of religions**:

- 1. Universalizing religions*- attempt to be global by appealing to all people regardless of location or culture.

- 58 percent of world's population practices a universalizing religion.

- » Christianity: 2.1 billion Christians

- » Islam: 1.5 billion Muslims

- » Buddhism: 376 million Buddhists

- 2. Ethnic religions*- appeal primarily to one group of people living in one place.

- 26 percent of world's population practices an ethnic religion.

Where Are Religions Distributed?

How do Universalizing and Ethnic Religions Differ?

Universalizing

- Appeal to people everywhere
- Individual founder (prophet)
- Message diffused widely (missionaries)
- Followers distributed widely.
- Holidays based on events in founder's life.

Ethnic

- Appeal to a smaller group of people living in one place.
- Unknown source.
- Content focused on place and landscape of origin.
- Followers highly clustered.
- Holidays based on local climate and agricultural practice

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Branches of Universalizing Religions
 - Three principal universalizing religions 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.

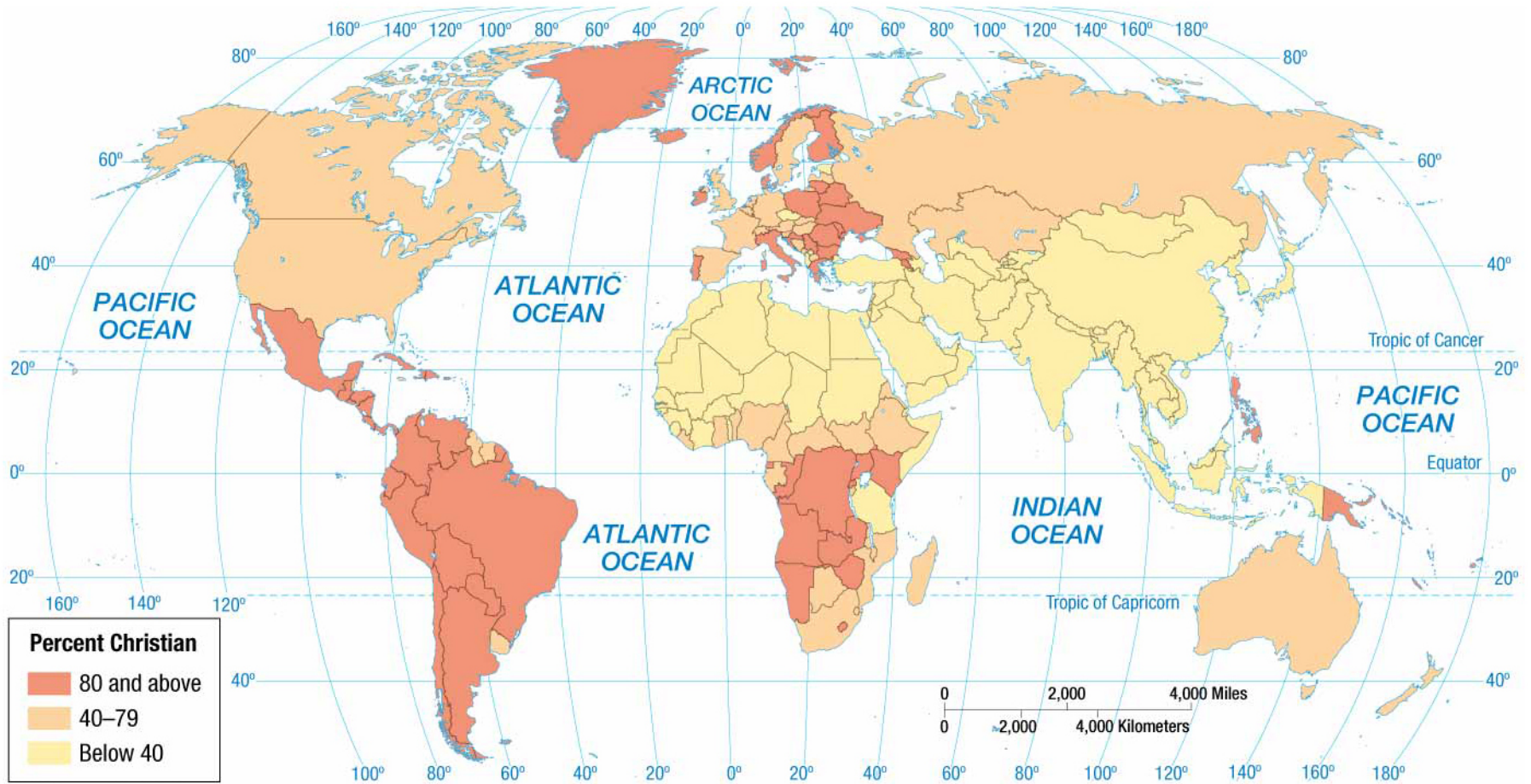
Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Branches of Universalizing Religions
 - Branches of Christianity in Europe
 - Three major branches include...
 1. *Roman Catholic* (51 percent of the world's Christians)
 2. *Protestant* (24 percent of the world's Christians)
 3. *Orthodox* or *Eastern or Greek Orthodox* (11 percent of the world's Christians)
 - Distributions
 - *Roman Catholicism* dominant branch in southwestern and western Europe.
 - *Protestantism* dominant branch in northwestern Europe.
 - *Orthodoxy (Eastern Orthodox)* dominant branch in eastern and southeastern Europe.

Where Are Religions Distributed?

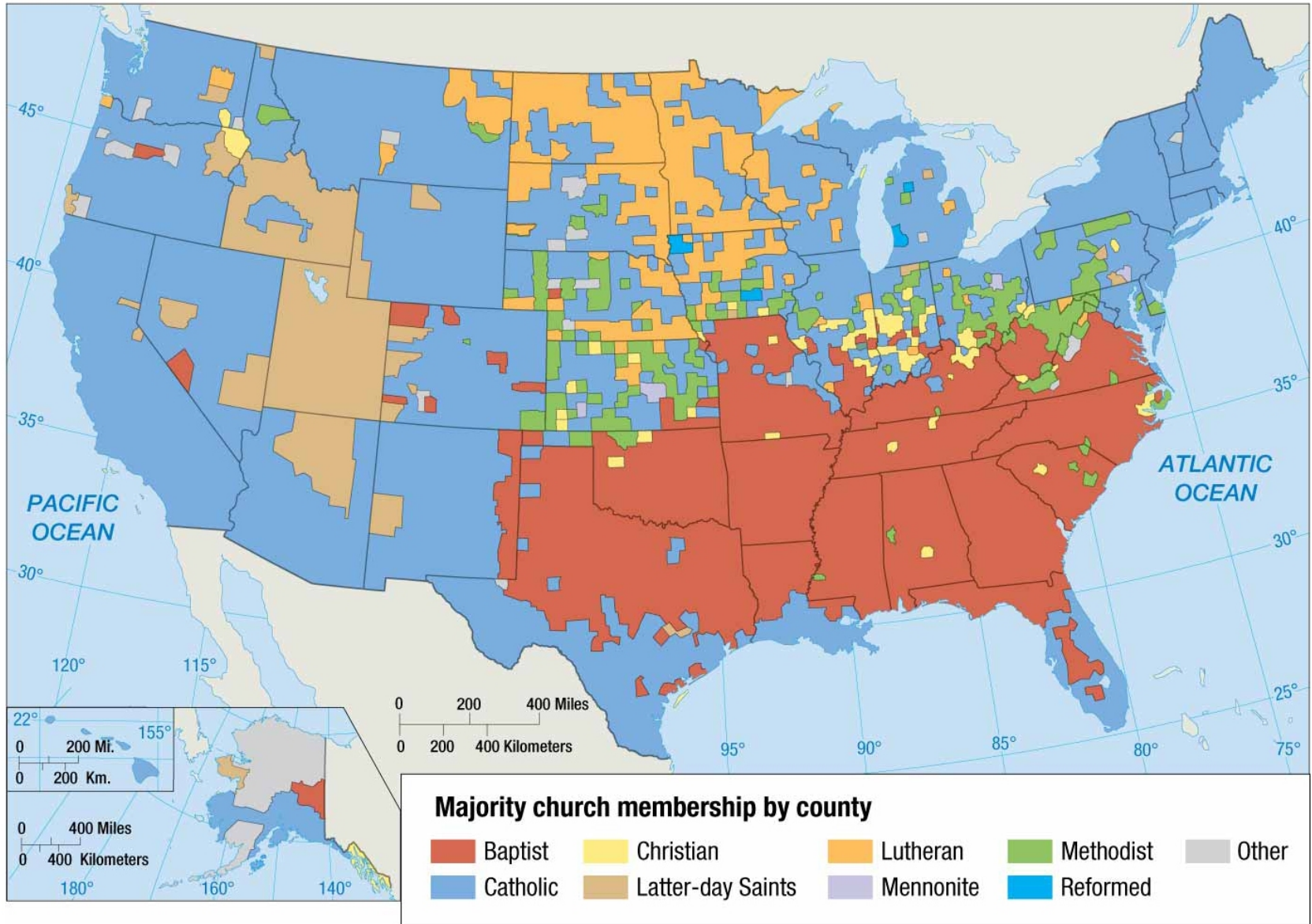
- Branches of Universalizing Religions
 - Branches of Christianity in the **Western Hemisphere**
 - 93 percent of Christians in **Latin America** are Roman Catholic.
 - 40 percent in North America
 - Protestant churches have approximately 82 million members in the United States.
 - **Baptist church** has largest number of adherents (37 million).

Distribution of Christians

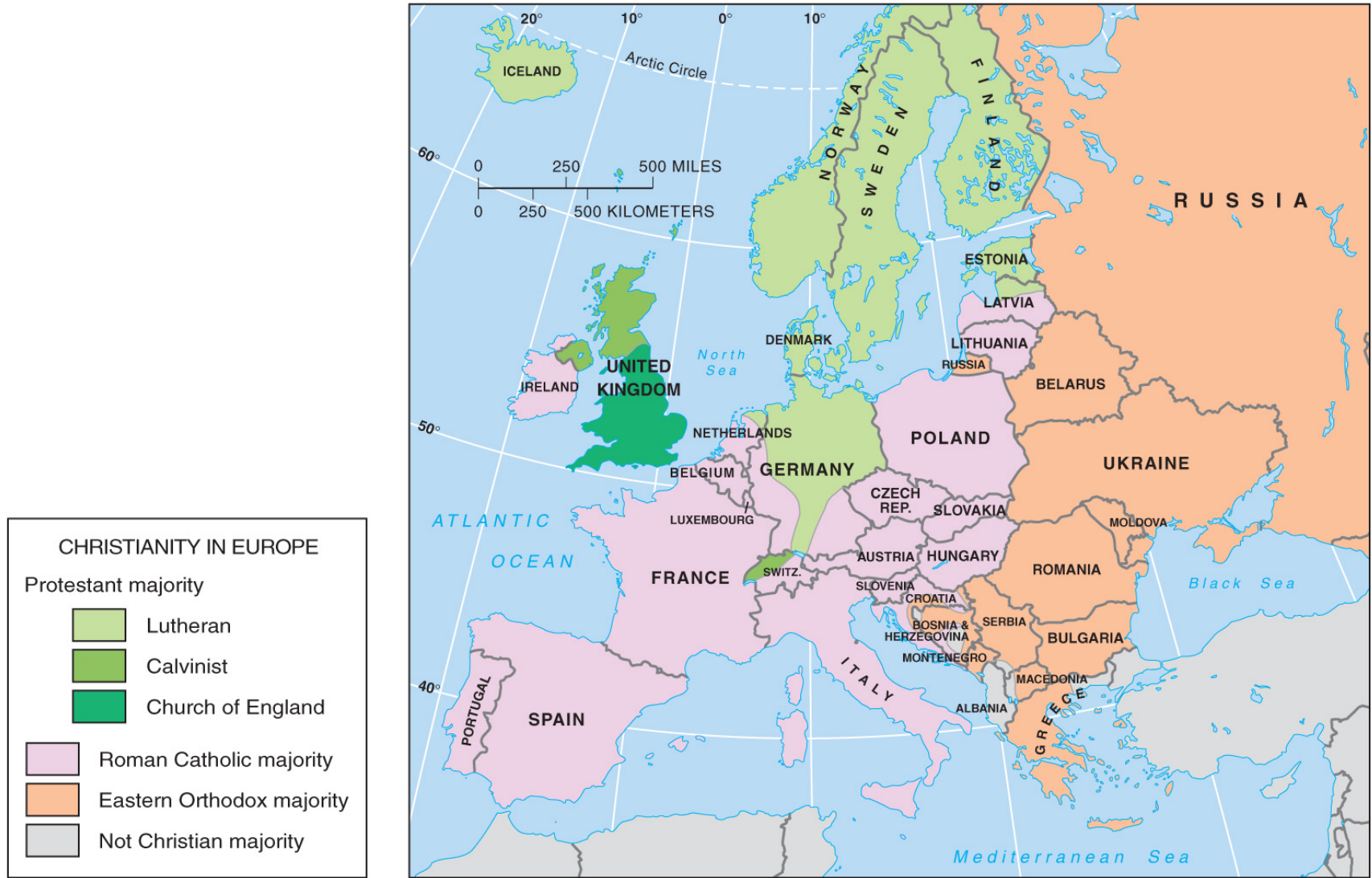


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Distribution of Christians in the USA



Distribution of Christians in Europe



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Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Islam

- Branches of Islam

- Two major branches include...

1. *Sunni*

- » Largest branch in most Muslim countries in Southwest Asia and North Africa
- » 83 percent of all Muslims

2. *Shiite*

- » Greatly concentrated in the Middle Eastern countries of Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Oman, and Bahrain
- » 16 percent of all Muslims

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Buddhism

- Branches of Buddhism

- Three major branches include...

- 1. Mahayana

- » 56 percent of Buddhists

- » Located primarily in China, Japan, and Korea

- 2. Theravada

- » 38 percent of Buddhists

- » Located primarily in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand

- 3. Vajrayana

- » 6 percent of Buddhists

- » Located primarily in Tibet and Mongolia.

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Ethnic Religions
 - Often remain within the culture where they originated.
 - Typically have relatively more clustered distributions than do universalizing religions.
 - Ethnic religion with largest number of followers is Hinduism.
 - 900 million adherents
 - Nearly all concentrated in India and Nepal

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- **Ethnic Religions**

- A combination of Buddhism (a universalizing religion) with Confucianism, Taoism, and other traditional Chinese practices is practiced in East Asia and Southeast Asia.

- Blending or combining of several traditions is known as *syncretism*.

- *Animism* is an ethnic religion whose followers believe that inanimate objects or natural events, such as natural disasters, have spirits and conscious life.

- 100 million Africans adhere to animism.

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Animism

- *Animism – or Shamanism* is an ethnic religion whose followers believe that inanimate objects or natural events, such as natural disasters, have spirits and conscious life.

- 100 million Africans adhere to animism.
 - Such beliefs are common among hunter-gatherers
 - These beliefs are losing ground to Christianity and Islam throughout Africa

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- **Syncretism**

- *Syncretism* is the mixing of two or more religions that creates unique rituals, artwork, and beliefs.

- Examples include syncretism of Christianity and indigenous beliefs in the Americas, Africa, and Asia.
 - Caribbean Voodoo (Haiti and Louisiana)
 - Christianity in indigenous Latin America

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Ethnic Religions

- Judaism

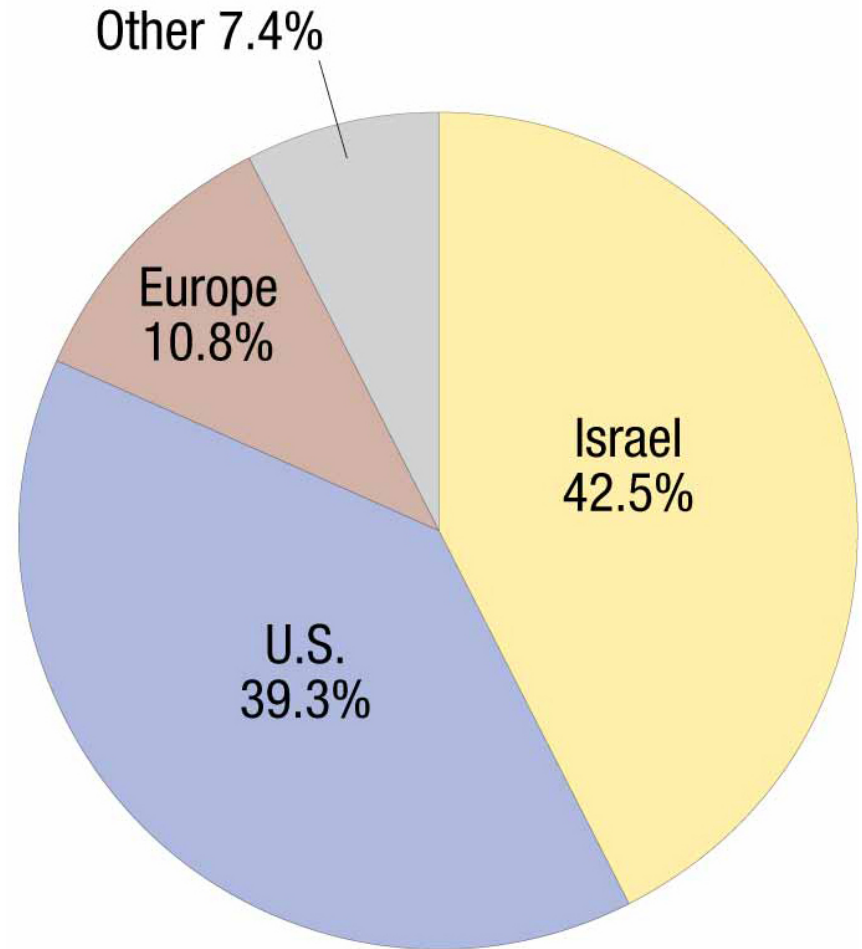
- First recorded religion to espouse *monotheism*, belief that there is only one God.
 - Contrasts *polytheism*- the worship of a collection of gods.
 - Distribution
 - 2/5 live in the United States
 - 2/5 live in Israel.
 - *Christianity and Islam find some of their roots in Judaism.*

Where Are Religions Distributed?

- Distribution of the world's Jewish Population

Approximately
42% in Israel
40% in the USA

Percent of world Jewish population



2010

Chapter 06

Key Issue 2:

Why do Religions have different distributions?

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Origins of Religions

- *Universalizing regions have precise places of origin*

- Often based on events in the life of an influential man.

- Ethnic religions not tied to single historical individual; often have unclear or unknown origins.

- Buddhism

- Founded: ~2,500 years ago

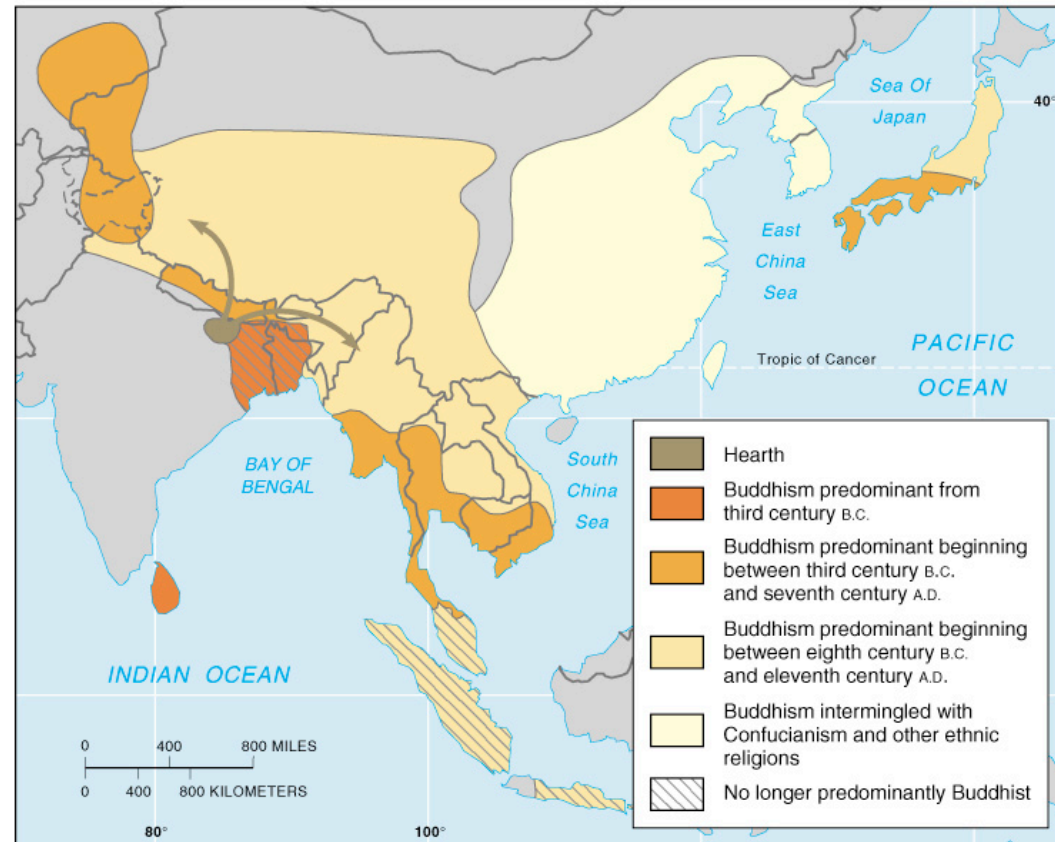
- Founder: Siddhartha Gautama

- Origin: India

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Origins of Buddhism

- Originated near modern Nepal around 530 BC by prince Siddhartha Gautama
- Indian traders brought it to China in 1st Century AD
- By the 6th Century AD, Buddhism had lost its hold on India, but was now practiced in Korea and Japan



Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Four Noble Truths of Buddhism

- All living beings must endure suffering
- Suffering, which is caused by desires, leads to reincarnation
- The goal of existence is an escape from suffering and the endless cycle of reincarnation by means of Nirvana
- Nirvana is achieved by the Eightfold Path – rightness of understanding, mindfulness, speech, action, livelihood, effort, thought, and concentration.
- **Karma** – Your past bad or good actions determine your progress toward Nirvana through reincarnation.

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Origins of Religions

- Christianity

- Founded: ~2,000 years ago
 - Founding: Based on teachings of Jesus
 - Origin: Region located in present-day Palestine

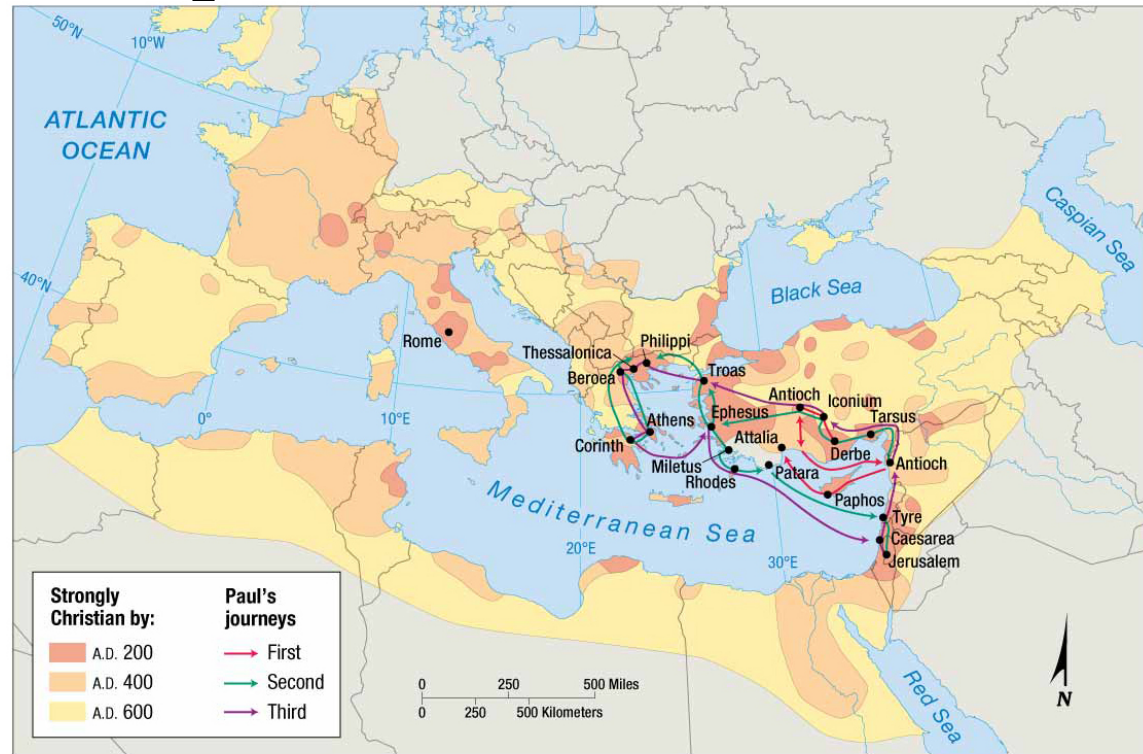
- Islam

- Founded: ~1,500 years ago
 - Founder: Prophet Muhammad
 - Origin: Makkah (Mecca) located in present-day Saudi Arabia

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Origins of Christianity

- Founded on the teachings of Jesus, who was born a Jew in Palestine, a Roman province.
- The Gospels of the Bible – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – document the life of Jesus.
- The followers of Jesus believed he was the Christ, the savior prophesized in Jewish Scriptures.



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The early diffusion of Christianity

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Christianity

- Christianity is the world's most widespread religion
 - 2 billion followers
- It is a monotheistic religion – belief in one God
- Christians believe that Jesus is the son of God
- Four Gospels found in Bible – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.
- Spread by missionaries and the Roman Empire

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Five Pillars of Islam

- There is one God and Muhammad is his messenger.
- Prayer five times daily, facing Mecca.
- The giving of alms (charity) to the poor.
- Fasting during Ramadan for purification and submission.
- If body and income allow, a Muslim must make a pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca in his lifetime.



Reading the Koran

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

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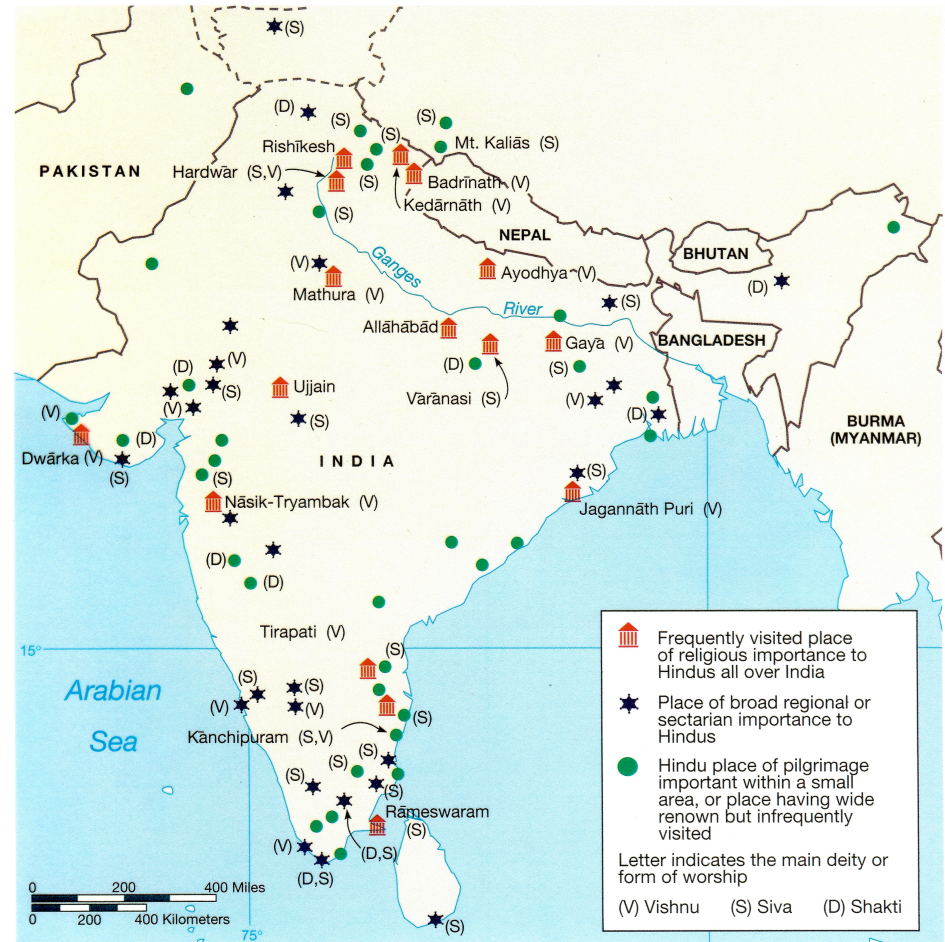
Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Origins of Other Universalizing Religions
 - Hinduism
 - Hinduism existed prior to recorded history
 - Hinduism: used to refer to people from India
 - Sikhism and Bahá'í
 - Founder of Sikhism: Guru Nanak
 - Sikhism believes in a Supreme Being (monotheistic)
 - Bahá'í: Establish a universal faith
 - Bahá'í emphasizes the spiritual unity of all humankind

Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

Hinduism

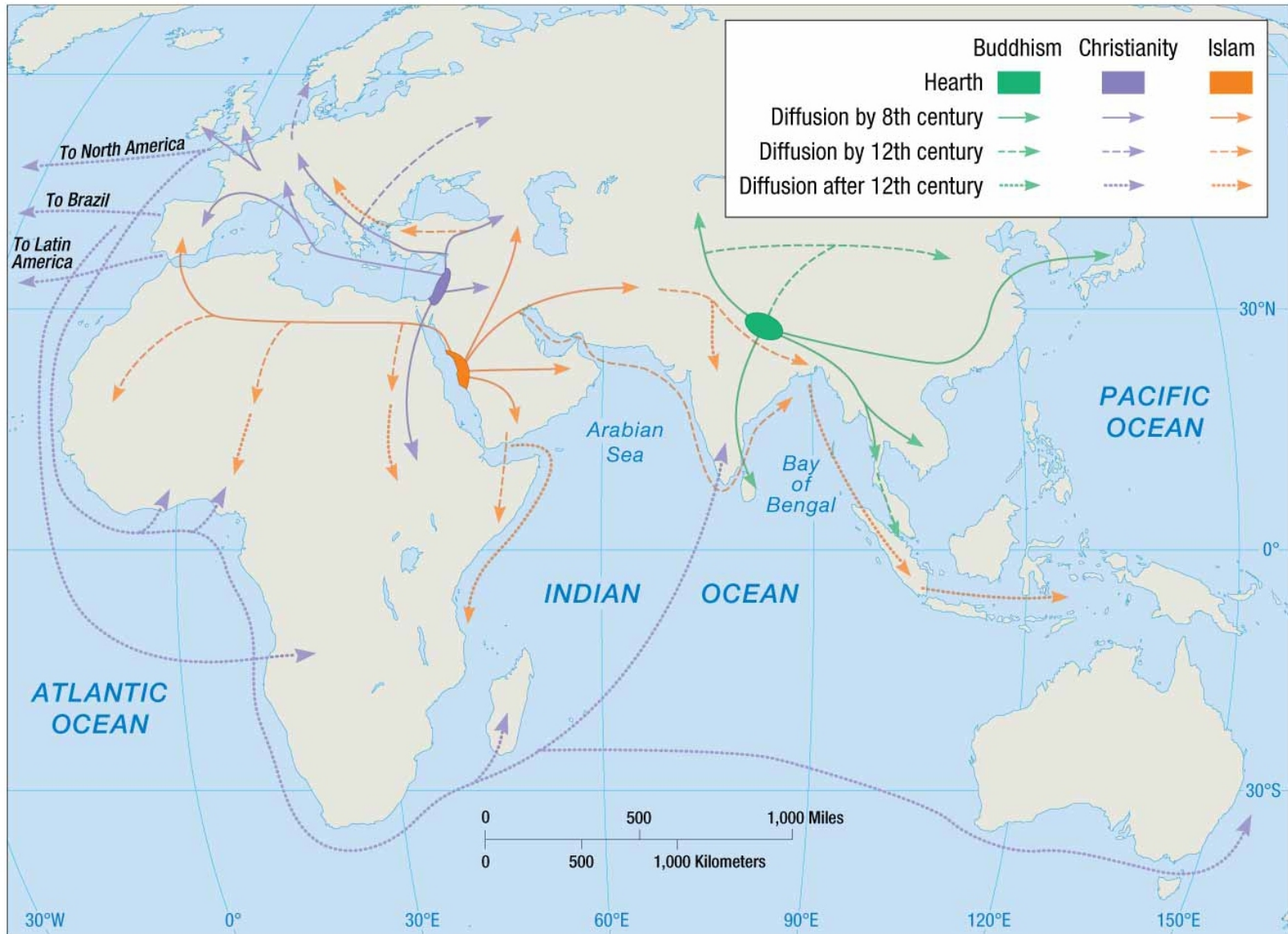
- Over 900 million followers
- Primarily found in India
- Hinduism is an ancient term for the complex and diverse set of religious beliefs practiced around the Indus River
- Belief in reincarnation – endless cycles



Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Diffusion of Religions
 - Asia is home to each hearth for Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.
 - Followers transmitted the messages preached in the hearths to people elsewhere.
 - Each of the three main universalizing religions has a distinct diffusion pattern.

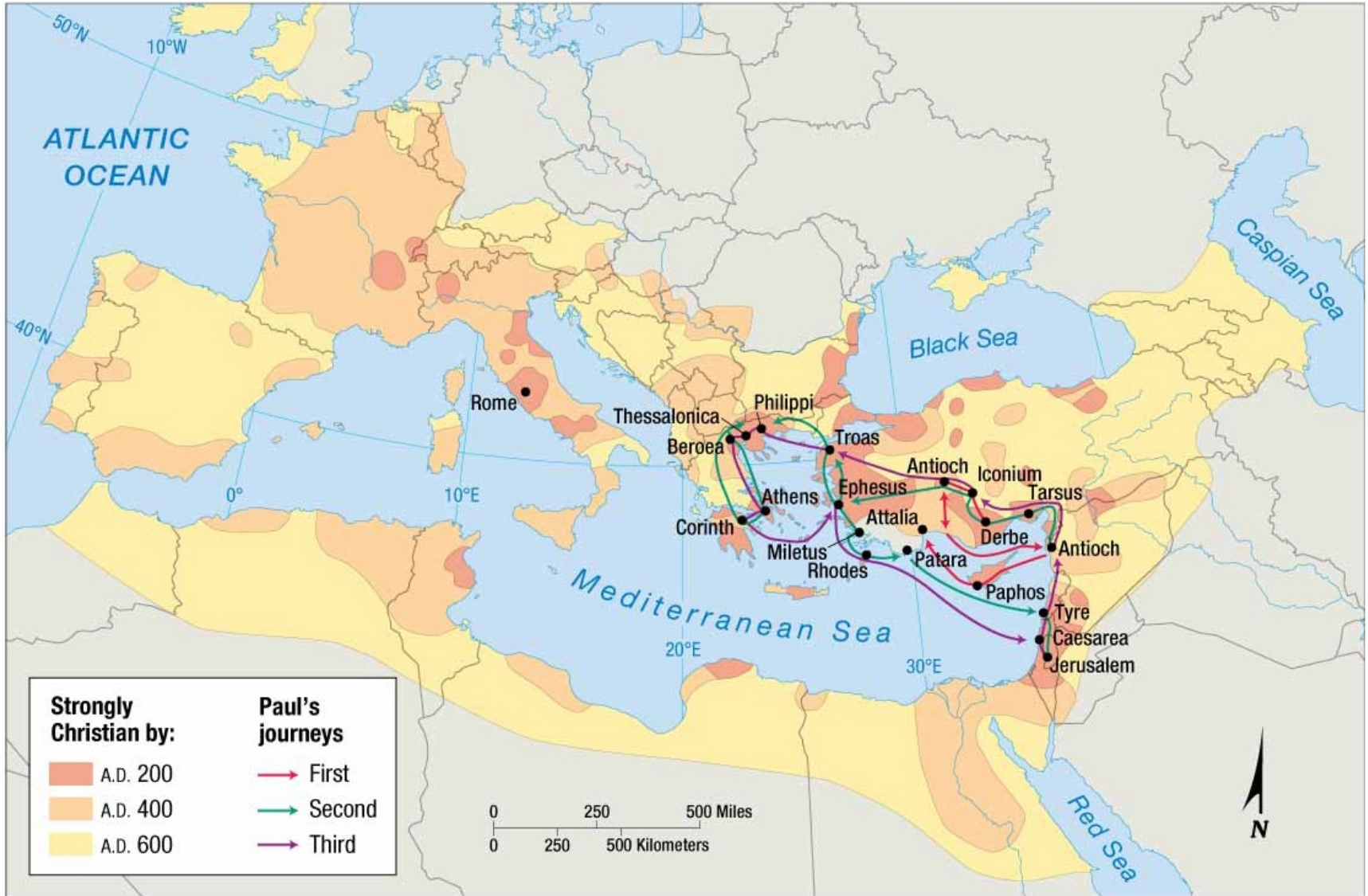
Diffusion of Universalizing Religions



Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Diffusion of Religions
 - Christianity
 - Hierarchical Diffusion
 - Emperor Constantine helped diffuse the religion throughout the Roman Empire by embracing Christianity.
 - Relocation Diffusion
 - *Missionaries*, individuals who help transmit a religion through relocation diffusion, initially diffused the religion along protected sea routes and the excellent Roman roads.
 - Migration and missionary activity by Europeans since 1500 have extended Christianity all over the world.
 - » Permanent resettlement in the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand

Diffusion of Christianity



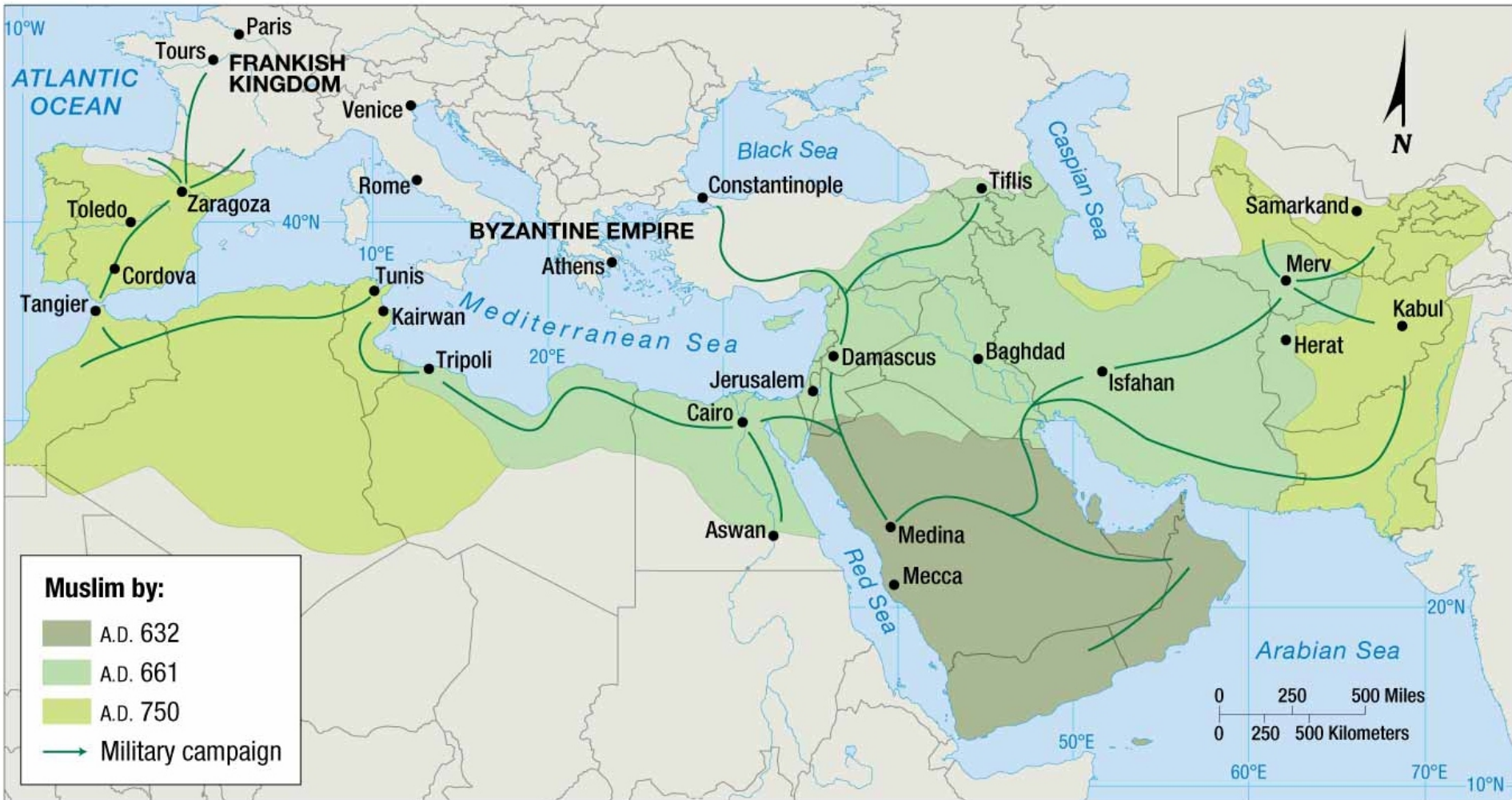
Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Diffusion of Religions

- Islam

- Muhammad's successors organized followers into armies and led a conquest to spread the religion over an extensive area of...
 - Africa
 - Asia
 - Europe
 - Relocation diffusion of missionaries to portions of sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia transmitted the religion well beyond its hearth.

Diffusion of Islam



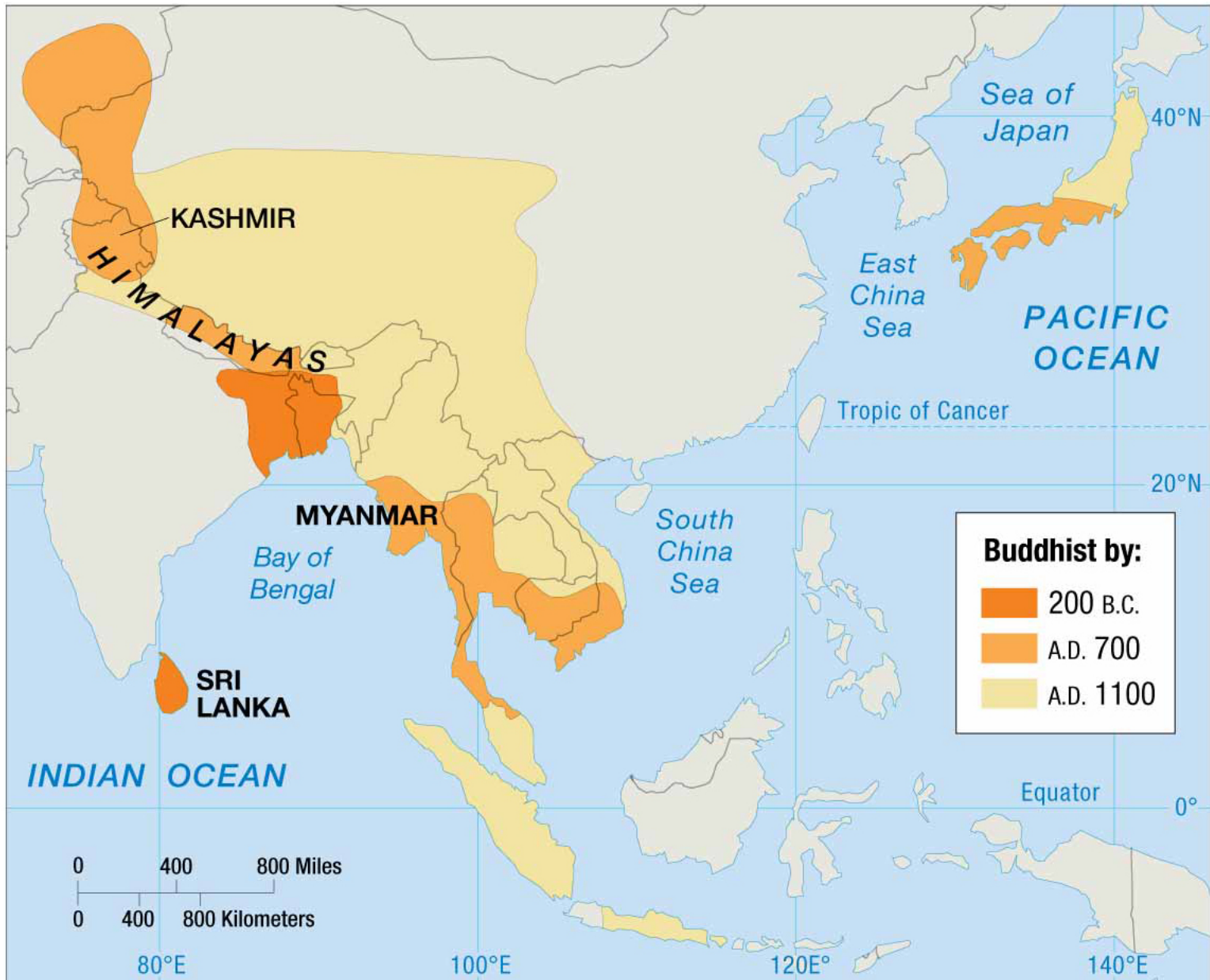
Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

- Diffusion of Religions

- Buddhism

- Diffused relatively slowly from its origin in northeastern India.
 - Emperor Asoka accredited with much of its diffusion throughout the Magadhan Empire (273 to 232 B.C.).
 - Missionaries sent to territories neighboring the empire.
 - Buddhism introduced to China along trade routes in the first century A.D.

Diffusion of Buddhism



Why Do Religions Have Different Distributions?

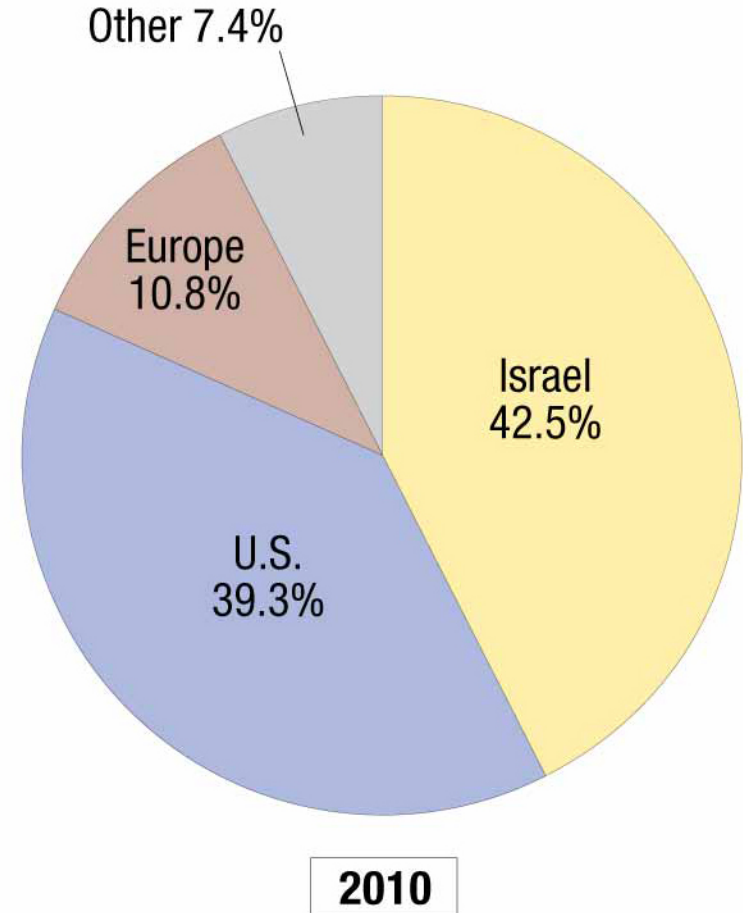
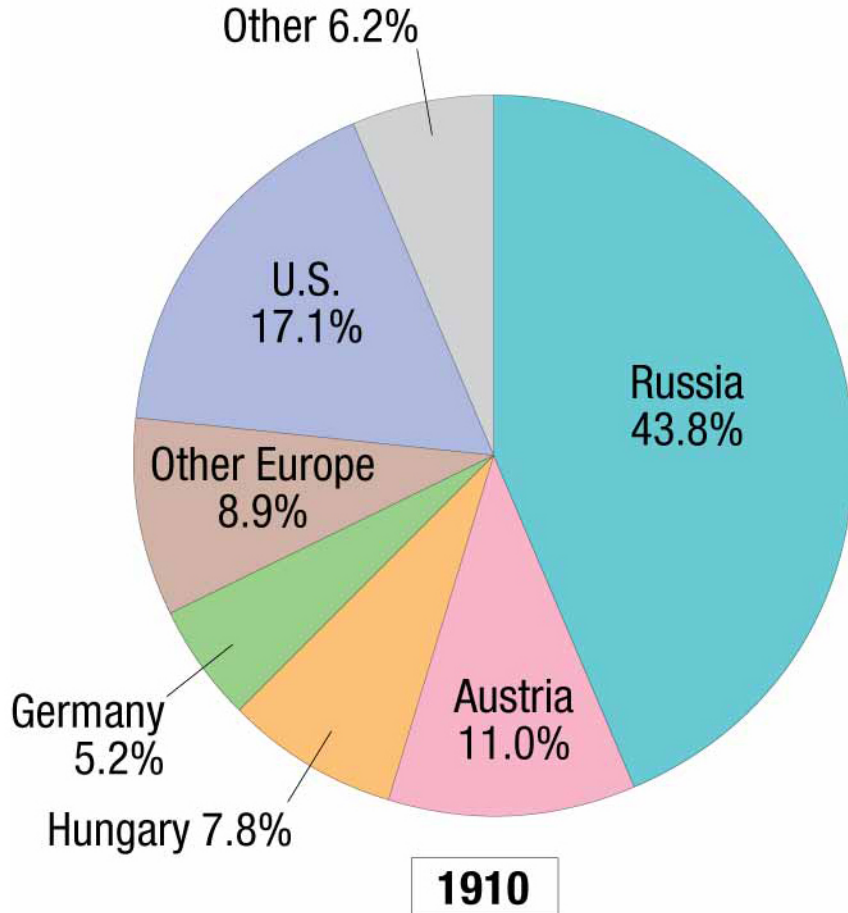
- Diffusion of Religions

- Ethnic Religions

- Most have limited, if any, diffusion.
 - Lack missionaries
 - Diffusion to new places is possible, if adherents migrate for economic gains and are not forced to adopt a strongly entrenched universalizing religion.
 - Judaism's diffusion is unlike other ethnic religions because it is practiced well beyond its place of origin.
 - Other nationalities have historically persecuted Jews living in their midst because of their retention of Judaism.

Distribution of Jews, 1910 and 2010

Percent of world Jewish population



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Chapter 06

Key Issue 3:

Why do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Sacred Space

- Geographers study the impact on the landscape made by all religions.

- Places of worship are sacred structures that physically anchor religion to landscape.

- Christian Church

- » More significant role in Christianity than in other religions because of belief that building is the house of God.

- » Church traditionally largest and tallest building in a community. Additional significance given to it by locating it in a prominent location—e.g., square or center of town

- » No single architectural style

- Bahá'í Houses of Worship

- » Dispersed to different continents

- » Open to adherents of all religions

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Sacred Space

- Muslim Mosques

- » Space for community assembly
 - » Not viewed as a sanctified place
 - » Attention to cardinal directions is emphasized— e.g., pulpit at end of a courtyard faces Makkah.
 - » Distinctive feature is a *minaret*, a tower where a man known as a *muezzin* summons people to worship.

- Buddhist Pagodas

- » Prominent and ornate element on landscape that often includes tall, many-sided towers arranged in a series of tiers, balconies, and slanting roofs.
 - » Contain relics believed to be a portion of Buddha's body or clothing.
 - » Not designed for congregational worship.

Buddhist Pagoda in Sarnath India



The Dhamek pagoda, in Deer Park, Sarnath, was built in the third century B.C., and is probably the oldest surviving Buddhist structure in the world.

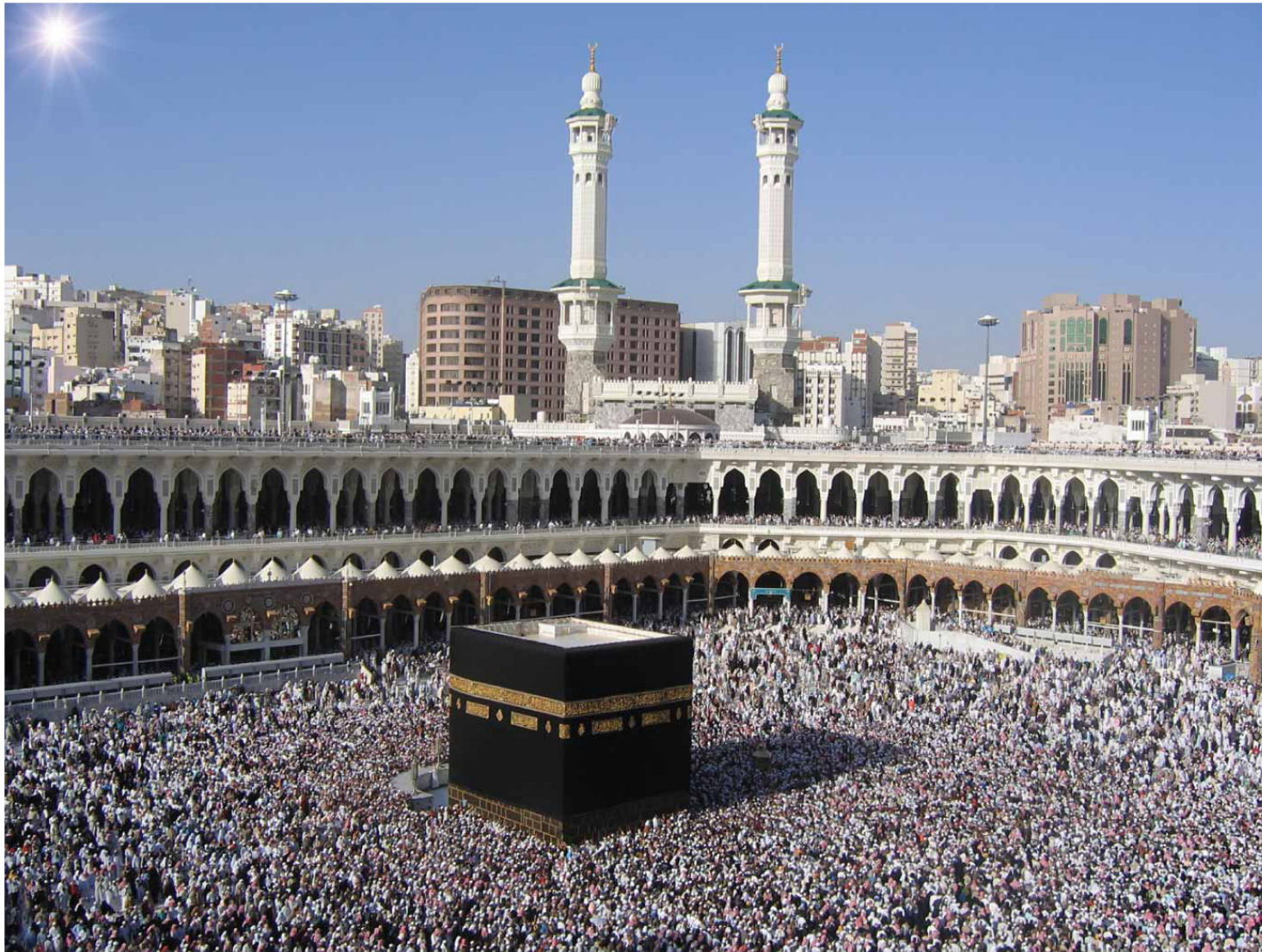
Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Sacred Places in Universalizing Religions
 - Cities and places associated with the founder's life are endowed with holiness.
 - Not necessarily in close proximity of each other
 - Not needed to be related to any particular physical environment
 - Buddhism and Islam place most emphasis on identifying shrines that mark locations of important events in the life of Buddha or Muhammad.
 - *Pilgrimages*, journeys for religious purposes, are incorporated in Islamic doctrine.

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Sacred Places in Universalizing Religions
 - Holy Places in Islam
 - Holiest locations are in cities associated with Prophet Muhammad.
 - Holiest City is Makkah (Mecca), birthplace of Muhammad.
 - » Now contains the holiest object in the Islamic landscape—al-Ka’ba—a cubelike structure encased in silk that stands in Islam’s largest mosque, Masjid al-Haram.
 - Second-most-holy place is Madinah (Medina).
 - » Muhammad’s tomb is in Madinah.

The Great Mosque



The black cube-like Ka'ba at the center of Masjid al-Haram (Great Mosque) in Makkah is Islam's holiest object.

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- The Landscape in Ethnic Religions
 - Ethnic religions are closely tied to the physical geography of a particular place.
 - Hindu Landscape
 - Hinduism closely tied to physical geography of India
 - » Mt. Kailas is holy because it is home to Siva.
 - » Holiest places are riverbanks and coastlines.
 - » Hindus believe that they achieve purification by bathing in holy rivers—e.g., Ganges River
 - Solstice
 - Special significance in some ethnic religions
 - » Stonehenge is a prominent remnant of a pagan structure aligned so that sun rises between two stones on solstices.

Stonehenge



Stonehenge was constructed between 4,000 and 5,000 years ago.

It is a prominent remnant of a pagan structure.

Sunrise at Stonehenge

Stones at Stonehenge were aligned with regard for the Solstice



Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Disposing of the Dead
 - Climate, topography, and religious doctrine combine to create differences in practices to shelter the dead.
 - Burial
 - Christians, Muslims, and Jews typically bury the deceased in designated areas called cemeteries.
 - » Cemeteries were typically only public open space in congested urban places prior to the nineteenth century.
 - Cremation
 - Hindus wash the bodies of the deceased with water from the Ganges River first, then burn them with a slow fire on a funeral pyre.

Muslim Cemetery in Egypt



Zoroastrian Tower of Silence in Iran



Hindu Cremation in Agra, India



Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Religious Settlements and Place Names
 - Most human settlements serve an economic purpose, but some are established primarily for religious reasons.
 - *Utopian settlement* is an ideal community built around a religious way of life.
 - Salt Lake City culminated the utopian movement in the United States when it was built by the Mormons.
 - Roman Catholic immigrants have frequently given religious place names, or *toponyms*, to settlements primarily in the U.S. Southwest and Quebec.

Religious Toponyms (Place Names)



Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- The Calendar
 - Universalizing and ethnic religions approach the calendar differently.
 - Ethnic Religion
 - Holidays are closely aligned with natural events associated with the physical geography of the homeland.
 - Prominent feature is celebration of the seasons.
 - » Closely tied to local agriculture
 - Universalizing Religion
 - Major holidays relate to events in the life of the founder rather than the seasons of one particular place.
 - » Ramadan (Islam): part of five pillars of faith
 - » Easter (Christian): resurrection of Jesus

New Moon in Islam



Ramadan

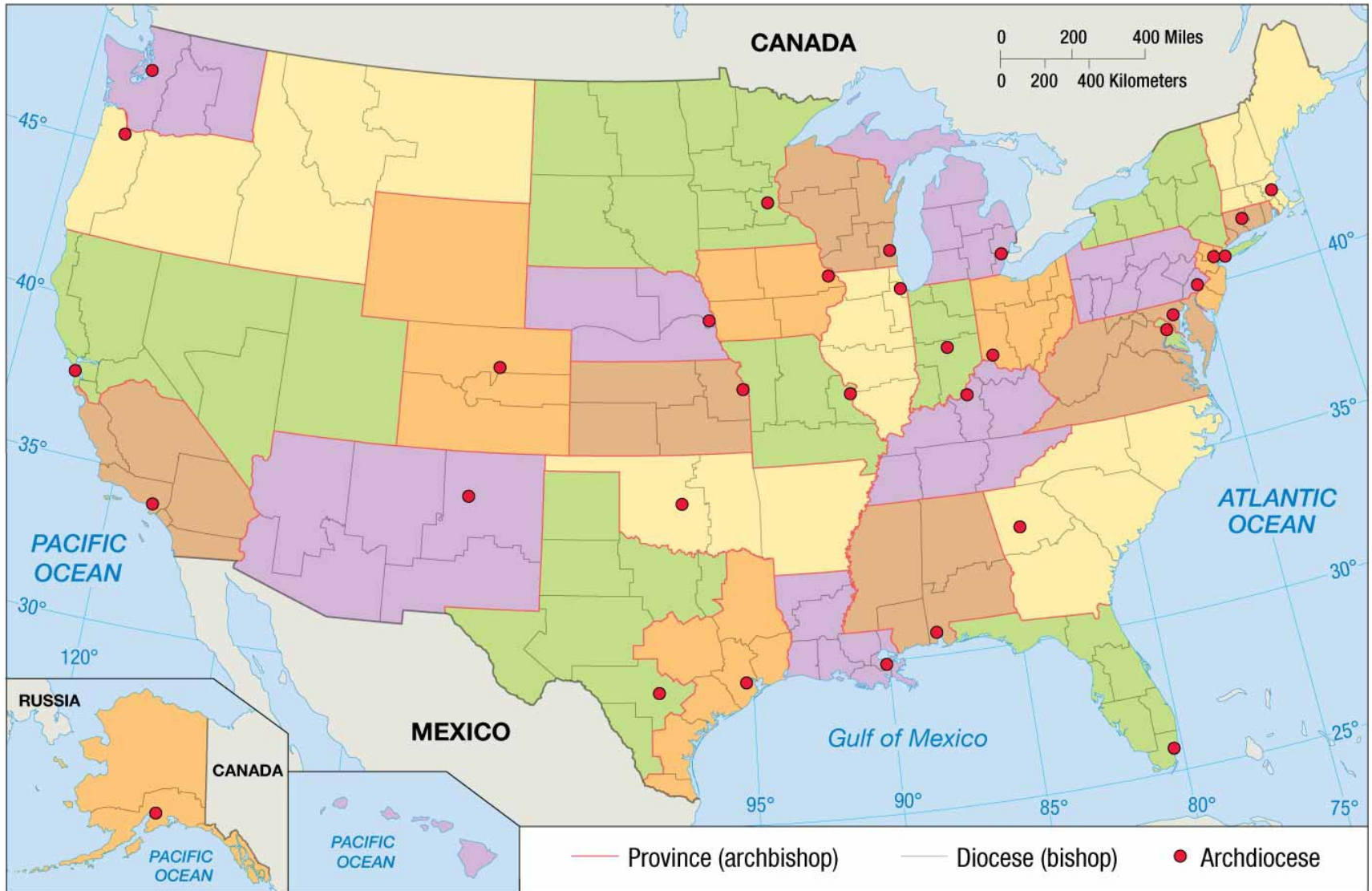


This is the scene of a street celebration on the night before the start of fasting for Ramadan

Why Do Religions Organize Space in Distinctive Patterns?

- Administration of Space
 - Universalizing religions must be connected to ensure consistency of doctrine.
 - Hierarchical Religions
 - Exemplifies a well-defined geographic structure and organizes territory into local administrative units.
 - » Roman Catholic Church created administrative units on much of Earth's inhabited land with each being headed by a leader who is accountable to the next higher-ordered leader.
 - Locally Autonomous Religions
 - Islam
 - » No religious hierarchy
 - » No formal territorial organization

Roman Catholic Hierarchy in the USA



Chapter 06

Key Issue 4:

Why do territorial conflicts arise among religious groups?

Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Religion versus Government Policies
 - Religious groups may oppose policies seen as contradicting their religious values.
 - Religion is element of cultural diversity that has led to most conflict in places.
 - Religious *fundamentalism*, a literal interpretation and strict adherence to basic principles of a religion, has spurred more intense conflict recently.
 - Taliban versus Western Values
 - Taliban's control of Afghanistan's government in the 1990s led to strict laws opposing Western values.
 - » “Western, non-Islamic” leisure activities banned
 - » Ex: Soccer stadiums converted to settings for executions and floggings.

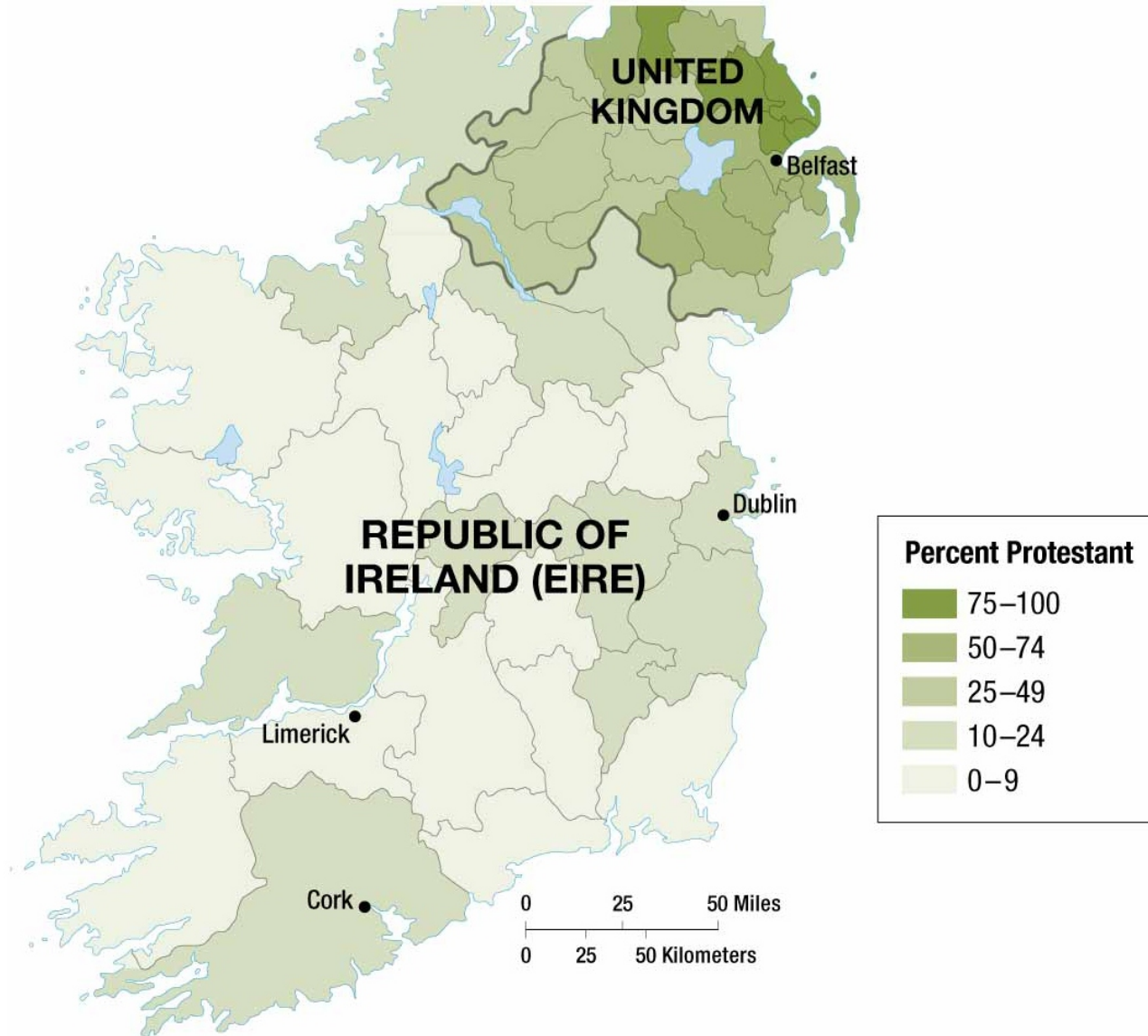
Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Religion versus Social Change
 - Participation in the global economy and culture can expose residents of LDCs to values and beliefs originating in MDCs.
 - Hinduism versus social equality
 - Hinduism has been challenged since the 1800s when the British introduced British social and moral concepts to India.
 - » Since 1950, India has enacted many laws and social initiatives to protect and improve the socioeconomic conditions of its lower caste population
 - » Discrimination against lower castes is illegal in India under Article 15 of its constitution

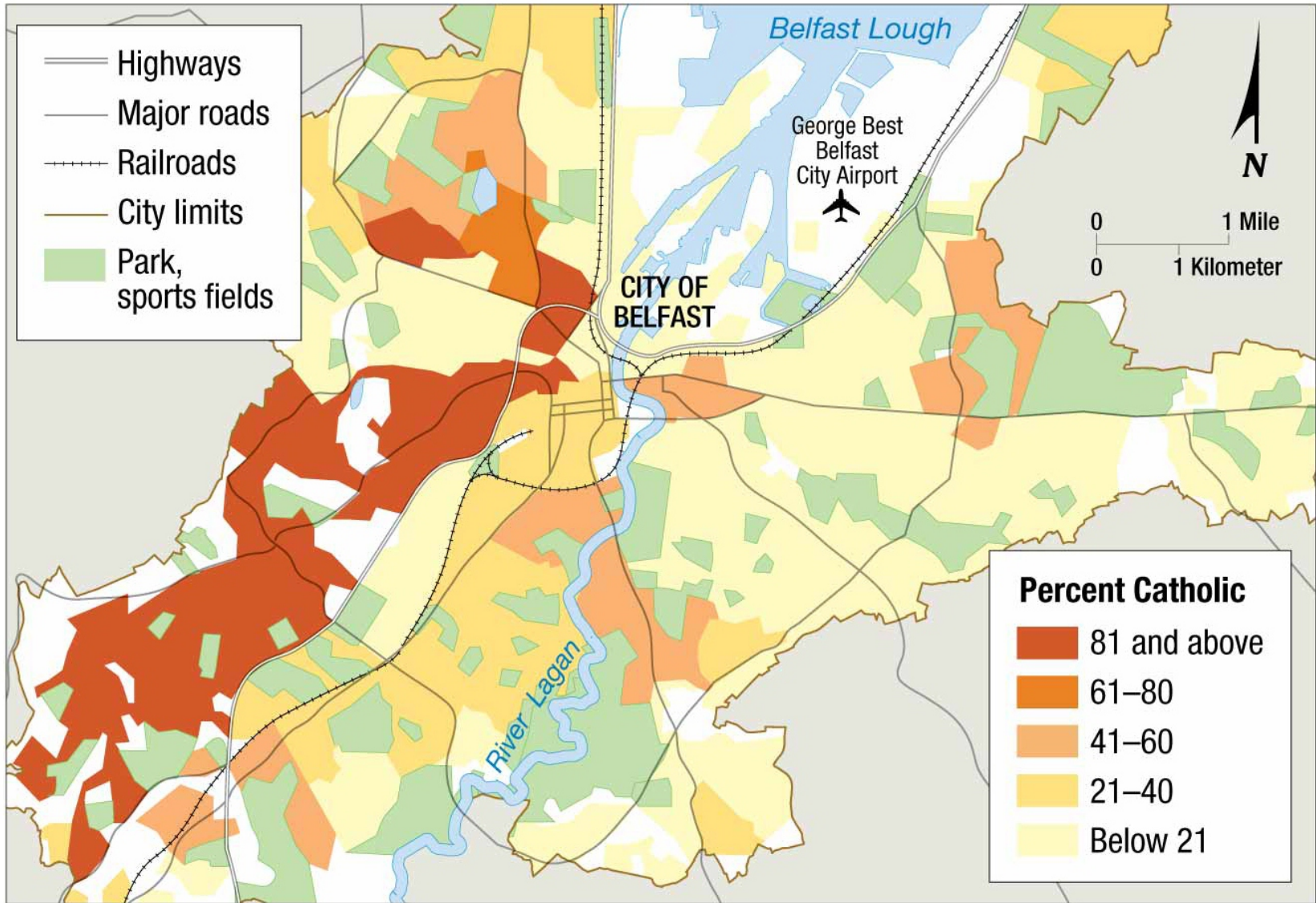
Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Religion versus Religion
 - Conflicts most likely to occur at a boundary between two religious groups.
 - Religious Wars in Ireland
 - A small faction chose to join the United Kingdom when Ireland became independent in 1937.
 - » 46 percent protestant and 40 percent Roman Catholic (2001)
 - Roman Catholics have been victimized by discriminatory practices, such as exclusion from higher-paying jobs and better schools.
 - Belfast, the capital city, is highly segregated.
 - Protests by Roman Catholics began in 1968 with bloodshed of both Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Distribution of Catholics and Protestants in Ireland



Catholics and Protestants in Belfast



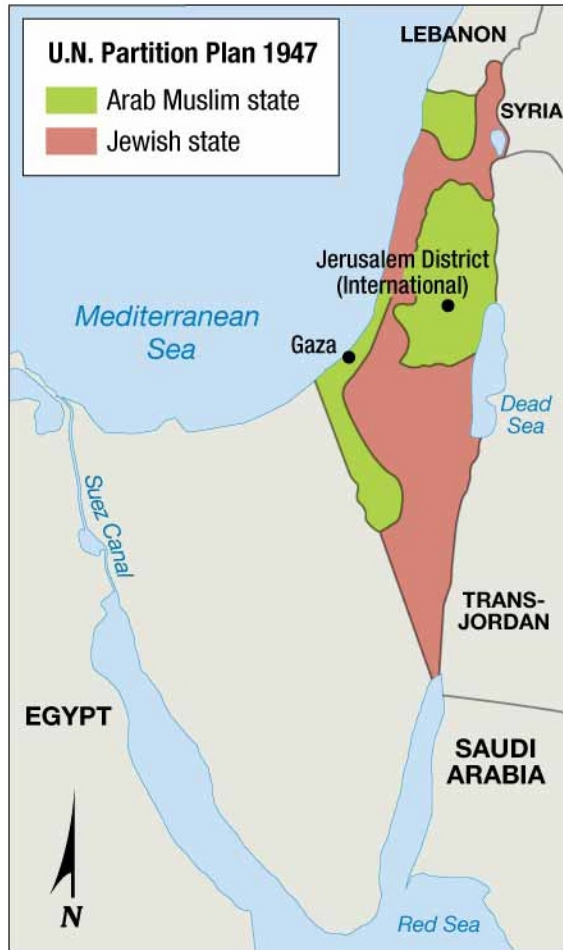
Christianity and Islam versus the former USSR



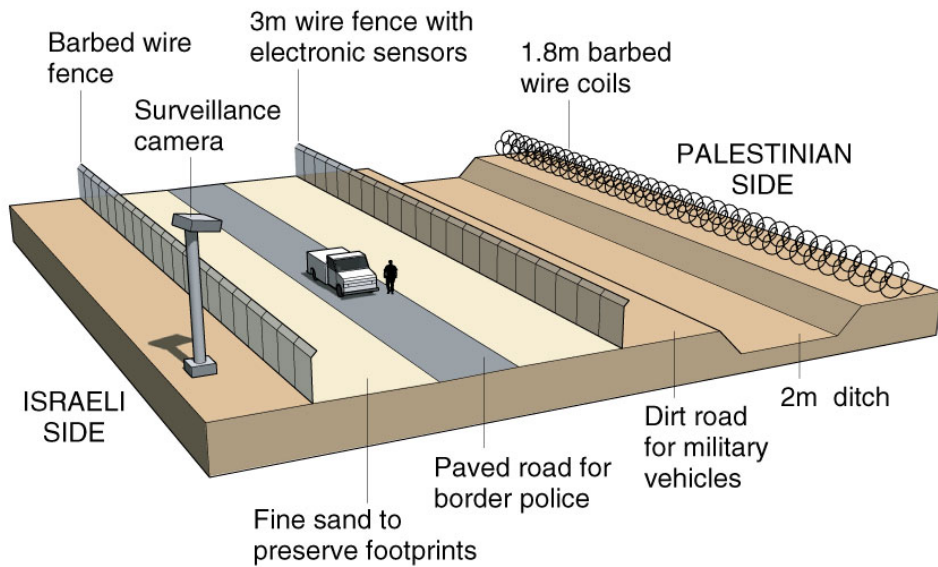
Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Religious Wars in the Middle East
 - Conflict in the Middle East is among the world's longest standing.
 - Jews, Christians, and Muslims have fought nearly 2,000 years to control the same small strip of Land in the Eastern Mediterranean.
 - Judaism: special claim to the territory it calls the Promised Land where major events in the development in the religion occurred.
 - Islam: Muslim army conquered this land in seventh century A.D. Jerusalem is the third holiest city to Muslims, because it is believed to be where Muhammad ascended into heaven.
 - Christianity: considers it the Holy Land and Jerusalem the Holy City, because the major events in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection occurred there.

Boundary changes in Israel/Palestine



Israel's "Separation Fence"



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A West Bank Settlement



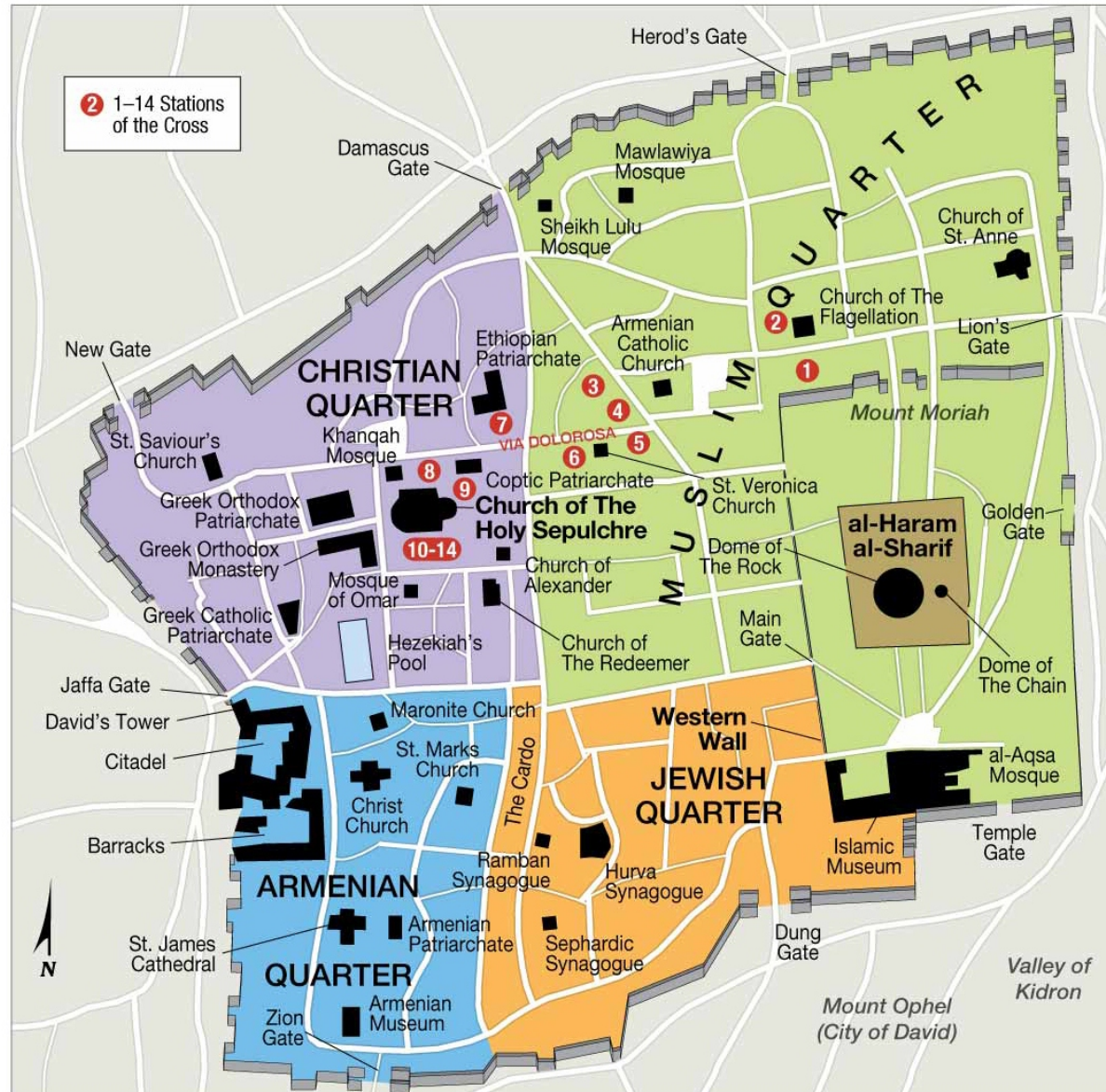
Google earth

Image © 2012 DigitalGlobe

Why Do Territorial Conflicts Arise among Religious Groups?

- Conflicting Perspectives of the Holy Land
 - After the 1973 war, the Palestinians emerged as Israel's principal opponent.
 - Palestinians viewed themselves as the legitimate rulers of Israel.
 - Biggest obstacle to peace in the Middle East is the status of Jerusalem.
 - Peace will likely not be possible, if one religion has political control over Jerusalem.

The Old City of Jerusalem



Summary

- The world has three large universalizing religions—Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism—each of which is divided into branches and denominations.
- A universalizing religion has a known origin and clear patterns of diffusion, whereas ethnic religions typically have unknown origins and little diffusion.

Summary

- Holy places and holidays in a universalizing religion are related to the events in the life of its founder or prophet. They are related to the local physical geography in an ethnic religion.
- With the Earth's surface dominated by four large religions, expansion of the territory occupied by one religion may reduce the territory of another.