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

Slovenia is a good example of a nation-state that was carved from the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Slovenes comprise 83 percent of the population of Slovenia, and nearly all the world’s 2 million Slovenes live in Slovenia. The relatively close coincidence between the boundaries of the Slovene ethnic group and the country of Slovenia has promoted the country’s relative peace and stability, compared to other former Yugoslav republics.

**KEY ISSUE 3**

**Why Do Ethnicities Clash?**

- **Ethnic Competition to Dominate Nationality**
- **Dividing Ethnicities Among More Than One State**

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

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**Ethnic Competition to Dominate Nationality**

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

**Ethnic Competition in the Horn of Africa**

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

**ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA.** Eritrea, located along the Red Sea, became an Italian colony in 1890. Ethiopia, an independent country for more than 2,000 years, was captured by Italy during the 1930s. After World War II, Ethiopia regained its independence, and the United Nations awarded Eritrea to Ethiopia (Figure 7-21). The United Nations expected Ethiopia to permit Eritrea considerable authority to run its own affairs, but Ethiopia dissolved the Eritrean legislature and banned the use of Tigrinya, Eritrea’s major local language. The Eritreans rebelled, beginning a 30-year fight for independence (1961–1991). During this civil war, an estimated 665,000 Eritrean refugees fled to neighboring Sudan.

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

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

Even with the loss of Eritrea, Ethiopia remained a complex multiethnic state. From the late nineteenth century until the 1990s, Ethiopia was controlled by the Amharas, who are Christians. After the government defeat in the early 1990s, power passed to a combination of ethnic groups. The Oromo, who are Muslim fundamentalists from the south, are the largest ethnicity in Ethiopia, at 34 percent of the population. The Amhara, who comprise 27 percent of the population, had banned the use of languages other than Amharic, including Oromo.
SUDAN. In Sudan, a country of 41 million, several civil wars have raged since the 1980s between the Arab-Muslim dominated government in the north and other ethnicities in the south, west, and east (Figure 7-22):

- South: Black Christian and animist ethnicities resisted government attempts to convert the country from a multi-ethnic society to one nationality tied to Muslim traditions. A north-south war between 1983 and 2005 resulted in the death of an estimated 1.9 million Sudanese, mostly civilians. The war ended with the establishment of Southern Sudan as an autonomous region scheduled to have a referendum on independence in 2011. Three bordering districts—Abyei, Nuba Mountains, and Blue Nile—may also become part of Southern Sudan in 2011.
- West: Black Muslim ethnic groups in the Darfur region of western Sudan fought against the government of Sudan beginning in 2003. The United Nations estimates that 400,000 died in Darfur and 2 million became refugees. The United States considers the mass murders and rape of civilians conducted by Sudanese troops to be genocide.
- East: Ethnicities along the Eastern Front fought the government of Sudan between 2004 and 2006 with the support of neighboring Eritrea. At issue was disbursement of profits from oil.

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

Somalia’s 9 million inhabitants are divided among several ethnic groups known as clans, each of which is divided into a large number of subclans. Traditionally, the major clans occupied different portions of Somalia. In 1991, a dictatorship that ran the country collapsed, and various clans and subclans claimed control over portions of the country. Clans have declared independent states of Somaliland in the north, Puntland in the northeast, Galmudug in the center, and Southwestern Somalia in the south.

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

Islamist militias took control of much of Somalia between 2004 and 2006. Neighboring countries were drawn into the conflict, Eritrea on the side of the Islamists and Ethiopia against them. Claiming that some of the leaders were terrorists, the United States also opposed the Islamists, and launched air strikes in 2007. The fighting generated several hundred thousand refugees. Islamist militias withdrew from most of Somalia in 2006, but have since returned and again control much of the country.

Ethnic Competition in Lebanon

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

Lebanon is divided between around 60 percent Muslims and 39 percent Christians (Figure 7-23). The precise distribution of religions in Lebanon is unknown, because no census has been taken since 1932. Lebanon’s most numerous Christian sect is Maronite, which split from the Roman Catholic Church in the seventh century. Maronites, ruled by the patriarch of Antioch, perform the liturgy in the ancient Syrian language. The second-largest are Greek Orthodox, the Orthodox church that uses a Byzantine liturgy.

Most of Lebanon’s Muslims belong to one of several Shiite sects. Sunnis, who are much more numerous than Shiites in the world, account for a minority of Lebanon’s Muslims. Lebanon also has an important community of Druze, who were once considered a separate religion but now consider themselves Muslim. Many Druze rituals are kept secret from outsiders.
Lebanon’s diversity appears to be religious not ethnic. But most of Lebanon’s Christians consider themselves ethnically descended from the ancient Phoenicians who once occupied present-day Lebanon. In this way, Lebanon’s Christians differentiate themselves from the country’s Muslims, who are considered Arabs.

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

Lebanon’s religious groups have tended to live in different regions of the country. Maronites are concentrated in the west central part, Sunnis in the northwest, and Shiites in the south and east. Beirut, the capital and largest city, has been divided between an Christian eastern zone and a Muslim western zone. During a civil war between 1975 and 1990, each religious group formed a private army or militia to guard its territory. The territory controlled by each militia changed according to results of battles with other religious groups.

When the governmental system was created, Christians constituted a majority and controlled the country’s main businesses, but as the Muslims became the majority, they demanded political and economic equality. The agreement ending the civil war in 1990 gave each religion one-half of the 128 seats in Parliament. Israel and the United States sent troops into Lebanon at various points in failed efforts to restore peace. The United States pulled out after 241 U.S. marines died in their barracks from a truck bomb in 1983. Lebanon was left under the control of neighboring Syria, which had a historical claim over the territory until it, too, was forced to withdraw its troops in 2005.

Dividing Ethnicities Among More Than One State

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

South Asia provides vivid examples of what happens when independence comes to colonies that contain two major ethnicities. Several major ethnic conflicts have ensued in the region.

India and Pakistan

When the British ended their colonial rule of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, they divided the colony into two irregularly shaped countries—India and Pakistan (Figure 7-24). Pakistan
GLOBAL FORCES, LOCAL IMPACTS

Dividing the Kurds

An example of an ethnicity divided among several states is the Kurds, who live in the Caucasus south of the Armenians and Azeris (Figure 7-25). The Kurds are Sunni Muslims who speak a language in the Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of Indo-European and have distinctive literature, dress, and other cultural traditions.

Kurds lived in an independent nation-state called Kurdistan during the 1920s, but today 30 million Kurds are split among several countries. Fifteen million live in eastern Turkey, 6 million in northern Iraq, 5 million in western Iran, 2 million in Syria, and the rest in other countries (refer to Figure 7-19). Kurds comprise 20 percent of the population in Turkey, 15-20 percent in Iraq, 8 percent in Syria, and 7 percent in Iran.

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

To foster the development of Turkish nationalism, the Turks have tried repeatedly to suppress Kurdish culture. Use of the Kurdish language was illegal in Turkey until 1991, and laws banning its use in broadcasts and classrooms remain in force. Kurdish nationalists, for their part, have waged a guerrilla war since 1984 against the Turkish army. Kurds in other countries have fared just as poorly as those in Turkey. Iran’s Kurds secured an independent republic in 1946, but it lasted less than a year. Iraq’s Kurds have made several unsuccessful attempts to gain independence, including in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1970s.

A few days after Iraq was defeated in the 1991 Gulf War, the country’s Kurds launched another unsuccessful rebellion. The United States and its allies decided not to resume their recently concluded fight against Iraq on behalf of the Kurdish rebels, but after the revolt was crushed, they sent troops to protect the Kurds from further attacks by the Iraqi army. After the United States attacked Iraq and deposed Saddam Hussein in 2003, Iraqi Kurds achieved even more autonomy, but still not independence. Thus, despite their numbers, the Kurds are an ethnicity with no corresponding Kurdish state today. Instead, they are forced to live under the control of the region’s more powerful nationalities.

FIGURE 7-25  Kurdish refugees, escaping from attacks by Saddam Hussein’s army during the 1991 war in Iraq, head for the Turkish border on foot.
comprised two noncontiguous areas, West Pakistan and East Pakistan—1,600 kilometers (1,000 miles) apart, separated by India. East Pakistan became the independent state of Bangladesh in 1971. An eastern region of India was also practically cut off from the rest of the country, attached only by a narrow corridor north of Bangladesh that is less than 13 kilometers (8 miles) wide in some places.

The basis for separating West and East Pakistan from India was ethnicity. The people living in the two areas of Pakistan were predominantly Muslim; those in India were predominantly Hindu. Antagonism between the two religious groups was so great that the British decided to place the Hindus and Muslims in separate states. Hinduism has become a great source of national unity in India. In modern India, with its hundreds of languages and ethnic groups, Hinduism has become the cultural trait shared by the largest percentage of the population.

Muslims have long fought with Hindus for control of territory, especially in South Asia. After the British took over India in the early 1800s, a three-way struggle began, with the Hindus and Muslims fighting each other as well as the British rulers. Mahatma Gandhi, the leading Hindu advocate of nonviolence and reconciliation with Muslims, was assassinated in 1948, ending the possibility of creating a single state in which Muslims and Hindus could live together peacefully.

The partition of South Asia into two states resulted in massive migration because the two boundaries did not correspond precisely to the territory inhabited by the two ethnicities. Approximately 17 million people caught on the wrong side of a boundary felt compelled to migrate during the late 1940s. Some 6 million Muslims moved from India to West Pakistan and about 1 million from India to East Pakistan. Hindus who migrated to India included approximately 6 million from West Pakistan and 3.5 million from East Pakistan. As they attempted to reach the other side of the new border, Hindus in Pakistan and Muslims in India were killed by people from the rival religion. Extremists attacked small groups of refugees traveling by road and halted trains to massacre the passengers.

Pakistan and India never agreed on the location of the boundary separating the two countries in the northern region of Kashmir (Figure 7-26). Since 1972, the two countries have maintained a “line of control” through the region, with Pakistan administering the northwestern portion and India the southeastern portion. Muslims, who comprise a majority in both portions, have fought a guerrilla war to secure reunification of Kashmir, either as part of Pakistan or as an independent country. India blames Pakistan for the unrest and vows to retain its portion of Kashmir. Pakistan argues that Kashmiris on both sides of the border should choose their own future in a vote, confident that the majority Muslim population would break away from India.

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

**Sinhalese and Tamil in Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka, an island country of 20 million inhabitants off the Indian coast, is inhabited by two principal ethnies known as Sinhalese and Tamil (Figure 7-27). War between the two ethnicities erupted in 1983 and continued until 2009. During that period, 80,000 died in the conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamil.

Sinhalese, who comprise 82 percent of Sri Lanka’s population, migrated from northern India in the fifth century B.C., occupying the southern portion of the island. Three hundred years later, the Sinhalese were converted to Buddhism, and Sri Lanka became one of that religion’s world centers. Sinhalese is an Indo-European language, in the Indo-Iranian branch.

Tamils—14 percent of Sri Lanka’s population—migrated across the narrow 80-kilometer-wide (50-mile-wide) Palk Strait from India beginning in the third century B.C. and occupied the northern part of the island. Tamils are Hindus, and the Tamil language, in the Dravidian family, is also spoken by 60 million people in India.

The dispute between Sri Lanka’s two ethnies extends back more than 2,000 years but was suppressed during 300 years of European control. Since independence in 1948, Sinhalese have dominated the government, military, and most of the commerce. Tamils feel that they suffer from discrimination at the hands of
the Sinhalese-dominated government and have received support for a rebellion that began in 1983 from Tamils living in other countries.

The long war between the ethnicities ended in 2009 with the defeat of the Tamil. With their defeat, the Tamil fear that the future of Sri Lanka as a multinational state is jeopardized. Back in 1956, Sinhalese leaders made Buddhism the sole official religion and Sinhala the sole official language of Sri Lanka. The Tamil fear that their military defeat jeopardizes their ethnic identity again.

**KEY ISSUE 4**

**What Is Ethnic Cleansing?**

- Ethnic Cleansing in Europe
- Ethnic Cleansing in Central Africa

Throughout history, ethnic groups have been forced to flee from other ethnic groups’ more powerful armies. **Ethnic cleansing** is a process in which a more powerful ethnic group forcibly removes a less powerful one in order to create an ethnically homogeneous region. In recent years, ethnic cleansing has been carried out primarily in Europe and Africa.

Ethnic cleansing is undertaken to rid an area of an entire ethnicity so that the surviving ethnic group can be the sole inhabitants. The point of ethnic cleansing is not simply to defeat an enemy or to subjugate them, as was the case in traditional wars. Rather than a clash between armies of male soldiers, ethnic cleansing involves the removal of every member of the less powerful ethnicity—women as well as men, children as well as adults, the frail elderly as well as the strong youth.

**Ethnic Cleansing in Europe**

The largest forced migration came during World War II (1939–1945) because of events leading up to the war, the war itself, and postwar adjustments (Figure 7-28). Especially notorious was the deportation by the German Nazis of millions of Jews, gypsies, and other ethnic groups to the infamous concentration camps, where they exterminated most of them.

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

The scale of forced migration during World War II has not been repeated, but in recent years ethnic cleansing within Europe has occurred in portions of former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia is part of a complex pattern of ethnic diversity in the region of southeastern Europe known as the Balkan Peninsula. The region, about the size of Texas, is named for the Balkan Mountains (known in Slavic languages as Stara Planina), which extend east–west across the region. The Balkans includes Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania, as well as several countries that once comprised Yugoslavia.

**Creation of Multiethnic Yugoslavia**

The Balkan Peninsula, a complex assemblage of ethnicities, has long been a hotbed of unrest (Figure 7-29). Northern portions were incorporated into the Austro-Hungary Empire; southern portions were ruled by the Ottomans. Austria-Hungary extended its rule farther south in 1878 to include Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the majority of the people had been converted to Islam by the Ottomans.

In June 1914, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serb who sought independence for Bosnia. The incident sparked World War I. After World War I, the allies created a new country, Yugoslavia, to unite several Balkan ethnicities that spoke similar South Slavic languages (Figure 7-30). The prefix “Yugo” in the country’s name derives from the Slavic word for “south.”

Under the long leadership of Josip Broz Tito, who governed Yugoslavia from 1953 until his death in 1980, Yugoslavs liked to repeat a refrain that roughly translates as follows: “Yugoslavia