

Why It Matters

This region has served as the crossroads for Asia, Africa, and Europe. As a result, the region has been home to many ethnic groups and cultures.

BiG Ideas

Section 1: North Africa

Places reflect the relationship between humans and the physical environment. The Sahara and access to water have profoundly affected the people of North Africa.

Section 2: The Eastern Mediterranean

Geography is used to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan for the future. Ancient civilizations and cultures continue to influence the subregion today.

Section 3: The Northeast

Culture influences people's perceptions of places and regions. Religious traditions have shaped the history of this subregion.

Section 4: The Arabian Peninsula

The characteristics and distribution of cultures influence human systems. The desert climate, coastal regions, and Islam have formed today's Arabian Peninsula.

Section 5: Central Asia

Geographers organize Earth into regions that share common characteristics. Central Asia's geography and climate have created challenges for the subregion.

North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia

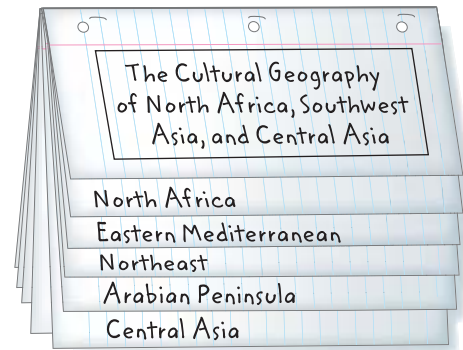
Geography ONLINE

Chapter Overview Visit the *Geography and History of the World* Web site at glencoe.com and click on Chapter Overviews—Chapter 18 to preview information about the cultural geography of the region.

An Egyptian man at the Fortress of Qaitbey, which offers views of Alexandria and the Mediterranean Sea.

FOLDABLES™
Study Organizer

Summarizing Information Make a Layered-Look Book to help you summarize information about each of the subregions discussed.



Reading and Writing As you read the chapter, make notes in your Foldable to summarize information about the cultures of each subregion.

NORTH AFRICA, SOUTHWEST ASIA, AND CENTRAL ASIA



North Africa

Guide to Reading

Section Preview

The Sahara and access to water have profoundly affected the peoples of North Africa.

Content Vocabulary

- nomad (p. 439)
- bedouin (p. 439)
- infrastructure (p. 440)
- domesticate (p. 440)
- hieroglyphics (p. 440)
- geometric boundary (p. 441)
- nationalism (p. 441)

Academic Vocabulary

- principal (p. 439)
- medical (p. 442)

Places to Locate

- Egypt (p. 439)
- Morocco (p. 439)
- Algeria (p. 439)
- Tunisia (p. 439)
- Casablanca (p. 440)
- Algiers (p. 440)
- Tunis (p. 440)
- Tripoli (p. 440)
- Libya (p. 440)
- Cairo (p. 440)
- Suez Canal (p. 441)

Reading Strategy

Organizing Complete a chart similar to the one below by listing information about each of the major ethnic groups in North Africa.

	Berber	Arab	European
Country			
Religion			
Language			

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS Geography and History of the World

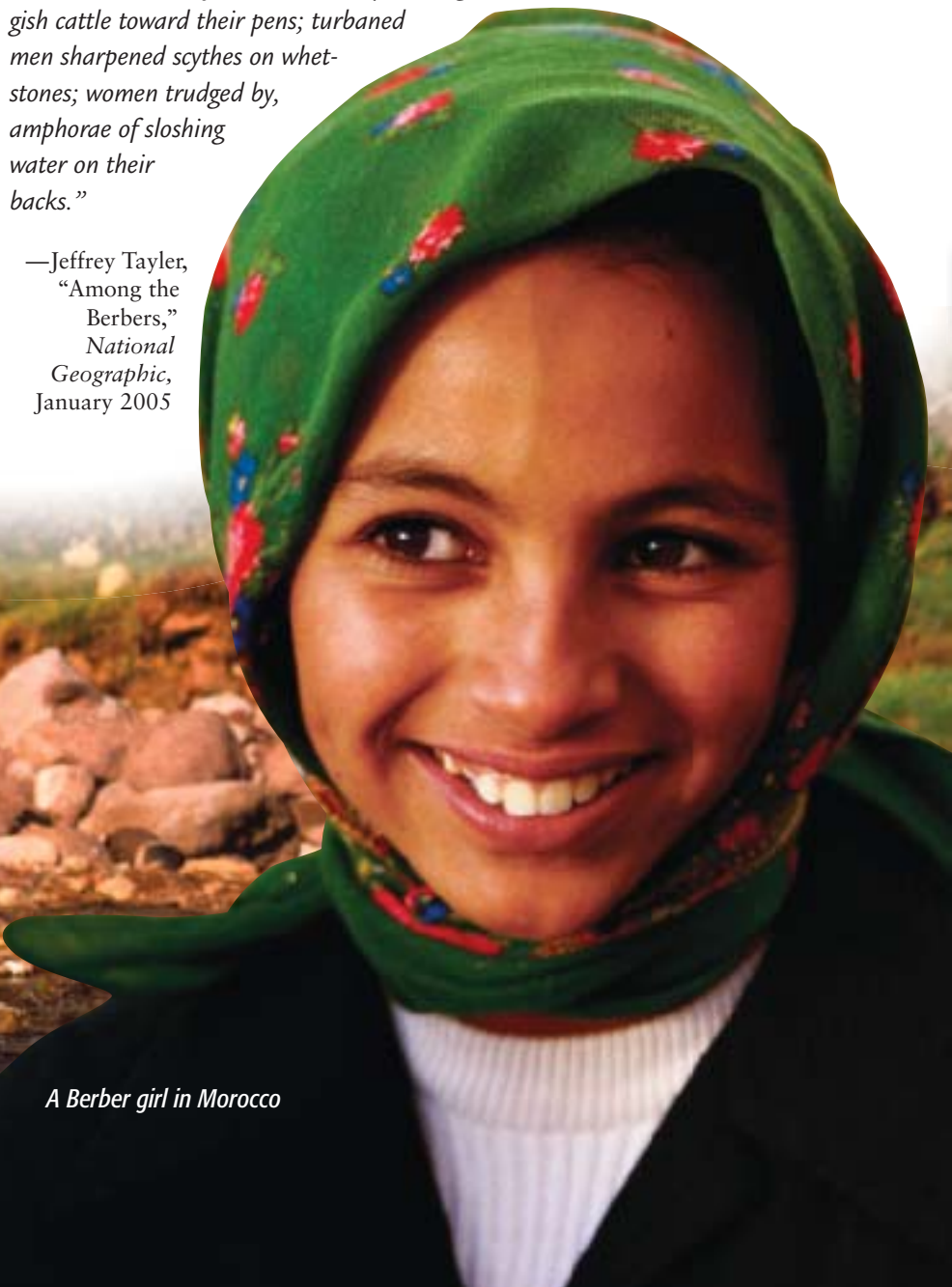
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As the birthplace of one of the world's earliest civilizations, North Africa has a rich cultural heritage. Although the traditions and cultures of some of the ethnic groups have changed with modernization and urbanization, some continue to hold on to their traditional ways of life.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VOICES AROUND THE WORLD

“As we entered the village, children saw me and cried, ‘Arrumi!’ (‘Roman!’), an offhand tribute to rulers 16 centuries gone and the name by which Berbers still refer to Westerners. Little appeared to have changed since the days of the Latins: Barefoot boys used sticks to prod sluggish cattle toward their pens; turbaned men sharpened scythes on whetstones; women trudged by, amphorae of sloshing water on their backs.”

—Jeffrey Tayler,
“Among the
Berbers,”
*National
Geographic*,
January 2005



A Berber girl in Morocco

Population Patterns

MAIN Idea Indigenous ethnic groups, migrations, and the dramatic climate have shaped population patterns in North Africa.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU How has climate affected your region of the United States? Read to learn how North Africa's water affects its population patterns.

Indigenous cultures in North Africa have mixed with those from the Arabian Peninsula and from Europe to form distinct cultures.

The People

While European influence remains in the coastal regions of North Africa, the primary influence on the subregion is a mix of indigenous and Arab cultures. The people indigenous to North Africa before Arab invasions are called Berbers. Most of the 15 million Berbers exist today as farmers, though previously they were pastoral **nomads**, groups of people who move from place to place

depending on the season and availability of grass for grazing and water. The Berbers are most populous in the Atlas Mountains and in the Sahara.

The other **principal** ethnic group in North Africa is the Arab people. United by language, Arabs first migrated from the Arabian Peninsula to North Africa in the A.D. 600s. Nomadic **bedouin** (BEH•doo•ihn) are Arabic-speaking people who migrated to North Africa from deserts in Southwest Asia. Bedouin can be found herding animals in the desert where there is enough vegetation to support their herds or water for growing food in oases. **Egypt** was the primary gateway for Arabs migrating to North Africa.

North African peoples have had continuous contact with Europe for hundreds of years, most notably in **Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia**. French, Spanish Muslims, Romans, and Jews have all influenced the culture in this subregion.

MAP STUDY

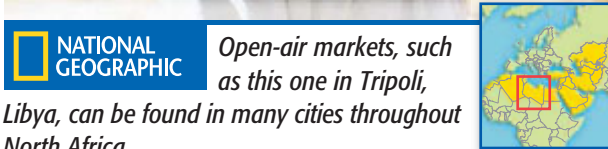
- Location** Where are North Africa's largest cities located?
- Regions** Which countries in the region are the most densely populated?

Use **StudentWorks™ Plus** or glencoe.com.

North Africa, Southwest Asia, and Central Asia: Population Density

POPULATION		Cities
Per sq. mi.	Per sq. km	(Statistics reflect metropolitan areas.)
1,250 and over	500 and over	◇ Over 10,000,000
250–1,249	100–499	■ 5,000,000–10,000,000
63–249	25–99	□ 2,000,000–5,000,000
25–62	10–24	○ 1,000,000–2,000,000
2.5–24	1–9	
Less than 2.5	Less than 1	





NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Open-air markets, such as this one in Tripoli,

Libya, can be found in many cities throughout North Africa.

Regions What are the major population centers in North Africa?

Density and Distribution

Geographic factors, especially the availability of water, have influenced settlement in the sub-region. Because water is scarce, people have for centuries settled along seacoasts and in river deltas, such as along the Nile River in Egypt. Today more than 90 percent of Egypt's people live in the Nile Delta region, one of the world's most densely populated areas.

The major population centers in North Africa are urban: **Casablanca**, Morocco; **Algiers**, Algeria; **Tunis**, Tunisia; **Tripoli**, Libya; and **Cairo**, Egypt. As Egypt's primate city, Cairo dominates social and cultural life in the country. Cities such as Cairo have grown rapidly as people move there in search of a better life. Problems have arisen in some cities because urban growth has occurred too quickly to supply enough jobs and housing or to develop the **infrastructure**—basic urban necessities such as streets and utilities.

READING Check **Human-Environment Interaction** How has the Sahara affected settlement patterns in North Africa?

History and Government

MAIN Idea The Sahara, the Nile River valley, and multiple invasions influenced different cultures throughout North Africa's history.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU How has the physical environment influenced events where you live? Read to learn how the physical environment has shaped the history of North Africa.

North Africa's location near Europe and Southwest Asia has made it vulnerable to numerous migrations and invasions over the centuries. As a result, European, Arab, and Berber influences exist in North Africa.

Early Peoples and Civilizations

Hunters and gatherers settled throughout North Africa by the end of the last Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago. By 6000 B.C., farming communities had arisen in areas along the Nile River and the Mediterranean Sea. The region's farmers were among the first to **domesticate** plants and animals, or adapt them from the wild for such uses as food, clothing, and transportation.

The Egyptian civilization developed in the fertile Nile River valley about 6,000 years ago. Annual floods from the Nile deposited rich soils on the floodplain. During dry seasons, Egyptians used sophisticated irrigation systems to water crops, enabling farmers to grow two crops each year. The Egyptians also developed a calendar with a 365-day year, built impressive pyramids as tombs for their rulers, and invented a form of picture writing called **hieroglyphics** (HY•ruh•GLIH•fihks).

Invasions

The seventh-century invasions of Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula heavily influenced the cultures of North Africa. The Berbers closely assimilated with Arab cultures in Algeria and Morocco, but less so in Tunisia. After brief Vandal and Byzantine invasions, Arab rule was established in Tunisia. The culture survived through Ottoman rule that lasted until 1922.

While Arab culture has persisted through the centuries in all North African countries, history

has brought other cultural influences to the sub-region. Internal invasions in the A.D. 600s from Arabs in the east brought Islamic religion and culture to Morocco. Muslim and Jewish exiles fleeing Christian persecution in Spain infused Morocco with Spanish culture in the 1400s. Early rule by Arab-Berber dynasties was eventually overturned by the Ottoman Empire in the 1500s in Algeria.

European colonial rule also affected people and cultures in North Africa. Algeria's short independence, followed by French invasion and conquest in the mid-1800s, imprinted French influence on the country. **Geometric boundaries**—which often follow straight lines and do not account for natural and cultural features—exist between Libya, Egypt, and Algeria. They were drawn by European colonial powers and often created conflict between the new countries because local practices of government were not the same as European ideas about governing.

During the 1800s a well-educated urban middle class developed in North Africa. Trained in European ways, this new middle class adopted European ideas about **nationalism**, or a belief in the right of an ethnic group to have its own independent country. This development stirred demands for self-rule that provided the basis for the modern countries that emerged in the subregion.

Independence

Egypt gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1922. The **Suez Canal**, an important shipping lane that connects the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea across Egypt, has made Egypt a key regional power. Egypt is also an important center of Arab nationalism.

Algeria gained independence from France when a strong nationalist movement led to a civil war in the mid-1900s. Since independence in 1962, Algeria has developed its

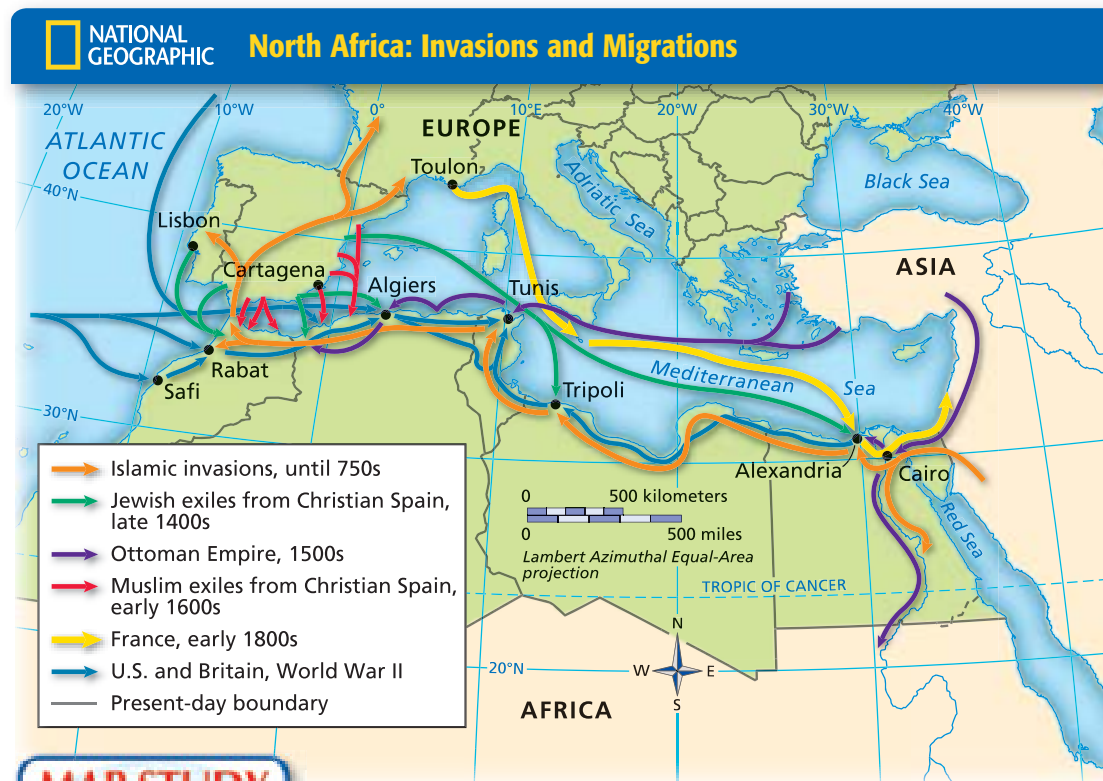
resources and increased its standard of living. However, a civil war in the 1990s killed over 100,000 people.

Other countries in the region also gained independence in the 1950s and 1960s. Libya won independence from Italy in 1951, but was then ruled by a strong, Western-friendly monarchy. In 1969 a coup led by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi overthrew the monarchy. Al-Qaddafi has ruled the oil-rich country to this day. Tunisia separated from France in 1956. Morocco won independence from France in 1956 and today is a constitutional monarchy.

READING Check **Regions** What movement led to the demand for self-rule in North African countries?

Geography ONLINE

Student Web Activity Visit glencoe.com, select the *Geography and History of the World* Web site, and click on Student Web Activities—Chapter 18 for an activity about Egypt.



MAP STUDY

- 1. Movement** Which cities were affected by Islamic invasions until the 750s?
- 2. Movement** Which later migration route is similar to that of Islamic invasions?

Culture

MAIN Idea The Muslim religion and the Arabic language define much of the culture of North Africa.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU Can you describe a culture in the United States that is connected by religion and language? Read to learn about such a connection in North Africa.

Indigenous, Arab, and European cultures have long shaped the lives of people in North Africa.

Religion and Language

When the Arabs invaded North Africa, they brought the religion of Islam. Most belong to the Sunni branch of Islam, which believes that leadership should be in the hands of the Islamic community at large. Most Berbers have adopted Islam, but some maintain indigenous religious practices.

Calls to worship occur five times each day in countries with large Muslim populations. A muezzin, or crier, calls the faithful to prayer from the minaret, or tower, of each local mosque. Following the movements of the imam, or prayer leader, they bow and kneel, touching their foreheads to the ground in the direction of the holy city of Makkah (Mecca) in Saudi Arabia.

As Islam spread across North Africa, so did the Arabic language. Non-Arab Muslims learned Arabic in order to read the Quran, Islam's holy book. As more people became Muslims, Arabic became the region's main language.

Education and Health Care

Most young people in North Africa attend school. Primary education is free, and enrollment is increasing. Literacy rates range widely, however, from about 52 percent in Morocco to about 82 percent in Libya.

Health care has also improved in recent decades. People often go to government-owned hospitals for **medical** treatment, but doctor shortages mean limited care for rural people.

The Arts

From the earliest times, the peoples of North Africa have expressed themselves through the arts. The Egyptians built towering pyramids to serve as royal tombs. The arts of weaving, embroidery, and metalworking in the region are highly influenced by Islam. One of Algeria's most popular forms of music, *rai*, involves various instruments and poetic lyrics.

READING Check **Place** What has been the primary influence on language in North Africa?

SECTION 1 REVIEW

Vocabulary

1. Explain the significance of: nomad, bedouin, infrastructure, domesticate, hieroglyphics, geometric boundary, nationalism.

Main Ideas

2. How have indigenous ethnic groups, migrations, and water availability shaped population patterns in North Africa?
3. Describe the impact of Islam and the Arabic language on culture in North Africa.
4. Use a table like the one below to list examples of how the Nile River valley, the Sahara, and invasions influenced the development of different cultures in North Africa's history.

Influence on Culture	Example
Nile River valley	
Sahara	
Invasions	

Critical Thinking

5. **Big Idea** How have North Africa's large bodies of water affected populations in the subregion?
6. **Drawing Conclusions** Why was the domestication of plants and animals so important for early peoples in North Africa?
7. **Analyzing Visuals** Study the population density map on page 439. Where are the largest concentrations of people in North Africa? Why are they concentrated there?

Writing About Geography

8. **Descriptive Writing** Think about the different challenges that people in North Africa face today in the desert and in the coastal areas and Nile Delta. Choose one area and write a paragraph describing the challenges of living there.

Geography  **ONLINE**

Study Central™ To review this section, go to glencoe.com and click on Study Central.



ANCIENT EGYPT'S ENDURING LEGACY: What factors influenced the development of ancient Egypt?

Ancient Egyptians took advantage of the physical geography of the Nile River valley to create an advanced, lasting culture that made significant contributions to civilization.

How and why was Egypt a culture hearth?

Egypt was one of the first river valley civilizations. Although there were periods of political upheaval, Egypt's history is marked by three distinct periods of stability and achievement. The Old Kingdom, from around 2700 B.C. to 2200 B.C., was a time of strong leadership and a unified Egypt. The Middle Kingdom, from about 2055 B.C. to 1650 B.C., was a period of stability. Finally, during the New Kingdom, from about 1550 B.C. to 1070 B.C., Egypt became the most powerful empire in Southwest Asia through military campaigns.

Located in the northeast corner of Africa, Egypt contained many natural elements that contributed to its success as a civilization, the most important being the Nile River. Egypt's major cities were located along the Nile, and it played a crucial role in the everyday lives of Egyptians.

The story of Egypt's civilization begins around 3100 B.C. when King Menes, the king of Upper Egypt, conquered Lower Egypt. He unified the two areas into a single government and established Egypt's first royal dynasty (a family of rulers who pass down the right to rule within the family).



▲ *The pyramids at Giza are the lasting legacy of the Pharaohs Khufu, Khafre, and Menkure.*

Unification brought about a complex government and social structure. At the top was the ruler, who eventually became known as the pharaoh. Upper and Lower Egypt were divided into 42 provinces, all of which were overseen by governors. The pharaoh appointed these governors, ensuring he was part of every aspect of Egyptian life. The government founded cities and created systems for taxation, trade regulation, and massive public works projects.

Along with the pharaoh, an upper class of nobles and elites ran Egypt's government. Below them were merchants, artisans, and scribes. Most people in Egypt, however, worked the land as farmers.

Egyptian civilization is noted for many accomplishments. Egyptians created a form of writing called hieroglyphics, made advances in mathematics, furthered medical knowledge, and developed an accurate 365-day calendar. Their most visibly enduring accomplishments, however, are their monuments—particularly their pyramids. The pyramids demonstrate not only their architectural genius, but also the connections between government, religion, and national pride. The pyramids were tombs for pharaohs, leaving their legacy behind for future generations to see.

How did Egypt's location influence its development?

Egypt's accomplishments gave it a permanent place in history, while other river valley civilizations disappeared. While its organization and leadership helped the civilization to last, Egypt's longevity owes a great deal to its locational advantages.

Egypt had natural barriers that provided protection from invasion and gave its inhabitants a sense of security. It had deserts to the west and east; the Red Sea to the east; cataracts, or rapids, along the Nile in the south; and the Mediterranean Sea to the north.

The deserts and waterways did not disconnect Egypt from the outside world. The deserts provided limestone and granite for building, and metals and semi-precious stones for trade. There were also copper and gold mines and marble quarries under its control. Egypt's location at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East also gave it a commercial advantage.

Egypt's most important advantage was the Nile River. It runs through Egypt and splits into two major branches before emptying into the Mediterranean Sea.

Culture Hearths

This split forms a triangular territory called a delta. Lower Egypt exists in the Nile Delta, which is also where Egypt's most important cities developed. Upper Egypt is the land upstream, to the south. The Nile was Egypt's lifeline, providing people with fish and predictably timed floods. These floods left a deposit of mud that created miles of fertile soil on either side of the river. Due to the soil and irrigation methods, there were enough surplus crops to support large urban populations. The Nile also served as a unifying force for Egypt, making transportation and communication easier.

At times the locational advantages could be disadvantages. The deserts had limited arable land, and if the Nile did not flood, famine was inevitable.

What factors helped Egyptian civilization endure?

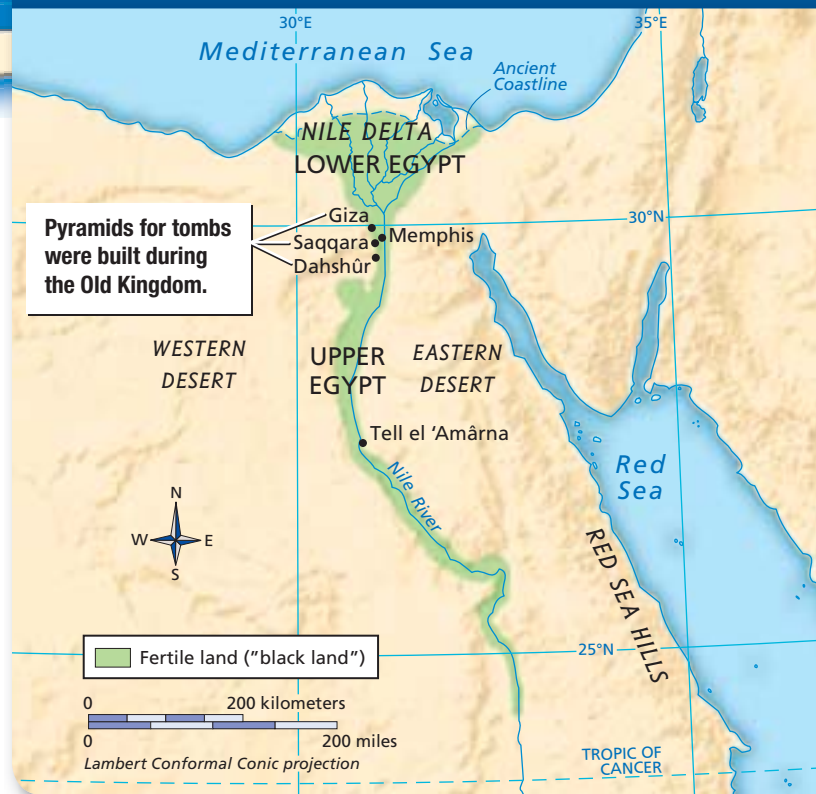
Unlike other culture hearths, Egypt's civilization was long-lasting due largely to its natural barriers. These barriers made it less susceptible to invasion and warfare than a civilization like Mesopotamia, which was located on a flat plain and a migration route, easily crossed by invading armies. Moreover, the Nile River's floods were more predictable than those of Mesopotamia's Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, allowing for a stronger agricultural economy.

Factors such as leadership and natural resources also contributed to Egypt's prolonged influence. Many Egyptian rulers were skilled at managing tax collection, resources, and public services, which helped them through times of invasion or drought. The Nile itself, running the length of the country, gave Egypt food, water, and transportation—resources many desert countries lacked. The Nile is still very important to Egyptians today. Instead of relying on flooding and ancient dams, irrigation of the Nile is regulated by the modern Aswān High Dam, among others. This regulation negatively affects soil fertility, and fertilizers are sometimes needed to replace the rich silt.

The function of the Nile has remained largely the same throughout history, although modern dams are now a source of hydroelectric power as well as irrigation. Most Egyptians still live near the Nile. Recent population growth and global warming present serious challenges: sustainability of the water supply; destruction of temperature-sensitive coral reefs; and saltwater leaching into soil from the rising Mediterranean Sea.

Today, people still marvel at Egyptian achievements and contributions in many arenas, including science, architecture, and mathematics. Egyptian knowledge of

The Geography of Ancient Egypt



the human body, gained through the process of mummification, enabled them to set broken bones and perform surgeries. Their study of astronomy yielded the first 365-day solar calendar, a format still used as the basis for today's calendars. They built dams and irrigation canals—still essential in dry regions—to control flooding and increase agricultural productivity. Egyptian chemistry produced valuable alloys, or mixtures of metals, such as bronze (usually made from copper and tin). The Egyptians developed early forms of algebra and geometry to build pyramids and other monuments. Their ancient monuments and pyramids instill national pride and attract millions of tourists annually. This wide range of achievement ensures Egypt's enduring legacy.

THINKING CRITICALLY

- Analyzing Information** Using the map and text, assess how Egypt's location helped it endure for thousands of years.
- Contrasting** List three ways in which ancient Egypt differed from other early river valley civilizations.
- Explaining** What contributions of ancient Egyptians influence the world today?

The Eastern Mediterranean

Guide to Reading

Section Preview

Ancient civilizations and cultures continue to influence the subregion today.

Content Vocabulary

- monotheism (p. 445)
- prophet (p. 445)
- mosque (p. 445)

Academic Vocabulary

- identity (p. 444)
- security (p. 446)
- ongoing (p. 446)

Places to Locate

- Israel (p. 444)
- Lebanon (p. 444)
- Palestine (p. 444)
- Syria (p. 444)
- Jordan (p. 444)
- Tel Aviv-Jaffa (p. 444)
- Beirut (p. 444)
- Jerusalem (p. 445)
- Makkah (Mecca) (p. 445)

Reading Strategy

Identifying As you read about the eastern Mediterranean, use a table like the one below to list the challenges faced by ethnic groups in the subregion.

Ethnic Group	Challenges

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS Geography and History of the World

GHW.2.1, GHW.2.2, GHW.2.4, GHW.3.1, GHW.3.2, GHW.3.3, GHW.5.2, GHW.6.3, GHW.7.1, GHW.7.2, GHW.7.3, GHW.10.2, GHW.10.6, GHW.11.2

The eastern Mediterranean was the birthplace of three major world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Periods of conflict and war have resulted as different peoples have laid claim to the lands of their religion's birthplace. In Israel today, Jewish and Palestinian peoples both claim rights to the same land.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC VOICES AROUND THE WORLD

“A north-south drive through the center of the West Bank on Road 60, which connects the historic cities of Jenin, Nablus, Bethlehem, and Hebron, takes four hours. Traversing one of the modern east-west highways that cross between the Jordan River and the so-called Green Line, which marks the West Bank's border with Israel, should take 30 minutes.”

—Andrew Cockburn, “Lines in the Sand,”
National Geographic, October 2002



A Palestinian man with an Israeli border officer

Population Patterns

MAIN Idea Migrations, claims to ancestral homes, and boundary disputes have influenced population in the eastern Mediterranean.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU Are there any regions of the United States to which many people have migrated? Read to understand what caused periods of migration in the eastern Mediterranean.

The eastern Mediterranean is inhabited by millions of Arab and Jewish people. Arabs share similar customs and speak Arabic. Jewish people speak Hebrew, and if they are religious, practice Judaism.

The People

About 7.1 million people in the eastern Mediterranean are Israelis living in **Israel**. Of these, 80 percent are Jewish. Jews, as followers of Judaism are known, in Israel and elsewhere trace their religious heritage to the Israelites, who

in ancient times settled Canaan, the land shared today by Israel and **Lebanon**. The Israelites believed that God had given them this area as a permanent homeland. Over the centuries, wars, forced exile, persecution, and trade led many Jews to settle in other countries. Their religious **identity**, however, kept alive their link to the ancestral homeland. In 1948 Israel was founded as a Jewish state. Today half of Israel's Jews were born in Israel, and half have immigrated.

Arabs in the region, however, did not want a Jewish state in the territory that had been their homeland for centuries. Tensions between Arabs and Jews resulted in six wars that brought severe hardship to all the people of the area, including the Palestinians—Arabs living in the territory of **Palestine**. During these conflicts, many Palestinians were displaced from their homes and had to live in refugee settlements in neighboring Arab countries, such as **Syria**, Lebanon, and **Jordan**. Many of these refugee settlements became permanent.

Density and Distribution

The dry, desert climate causes the majority of people in the eastern Mediterranean to live along coastal plains and in the Euphrates River valley. The lack of water in many areas, coupled with small land areas and significant human populations, creates some of the highest population densities in Southwest Asia. For example, Lebanon has a population density of 941 people per square mile (365 per sq. km).

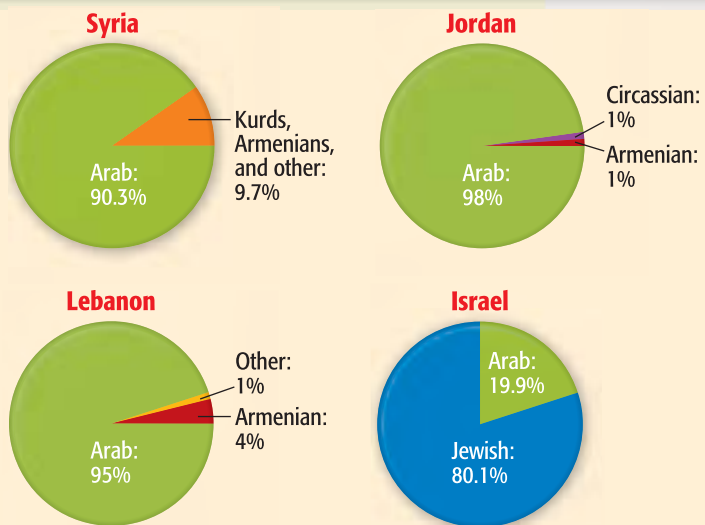
The eastern Mediterranean subregion is predominantly urban, with more than 75 percent of people in Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon and just over 50 percent in Syria and Palestine living in cities. Many people live in **Tel Aviv-Jaffa** and other cities along the coast in central Israel. Much of Lebanon's population lives in the coastal cities of **Beirut** and Tripoli and their surrounding suburbs.

Israel has experienced intense periods of immigration since its founding in 1948. About one million Jews have migrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union since 1989—the largest influx since Israel's beginning. People have migrated from more than 100 countries, making Israel ethnically diverse.

READING Check **Movement** What led Jews to settle in Israel?



Ethnic Groups in the Eastern Mediterranean



Source: www.cia.gov, The World Factbook 2006.

GRAPH STUDY

- Place** How is Israel's ethnic composition different from that of other countries in the eastern Mediterranean?
- Regions** Other than large Arab populations, what does the ethnic makeup of Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan have in common?



Use StudentWorks™ Plus or glencoe.com.

History and Government

MAIN Idea The eastern Mediterranean is home to three of the world's major religions that have shaped politics and culture there for centuries.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU How many different religions are practiced in the United States? Read to learn about the influence of religion on the history of the eastern Mediterranean.

As a bridge between Europe, Africa, and Asia, the eastern Mediterranean has been occupied by cultures from each of these continents throughout history. The rise of influential religions in the subregion has profoundly affected its various cultures.

Early Civilizations

The entire region has been occupied by important cultures and empires over the centuries. Ebla, Syria, was an important commercial trade center by 3000 B.C. Hundreds of thousands of people lived in this Semitic empire somewhere around 2400 B.C. Damascus, Syria, is one of the oldest, continuously settled cities in the world.

Religion as History

Three major religions began in the eastern Mediterranean subregion: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. All three share many beliefs, especially **monotheism**, or belief in one god. As the map at the right shows, the city of **Jerusalem** is of special importance to all three religions.

Judaism Judaism is one of the oldest of the monotheistic faiths. Jews trace their origin to the ancient Israelites, who created the kingdom of Israel along the eastern Mediterranean coast. Jerusalem was its capital and religious center.

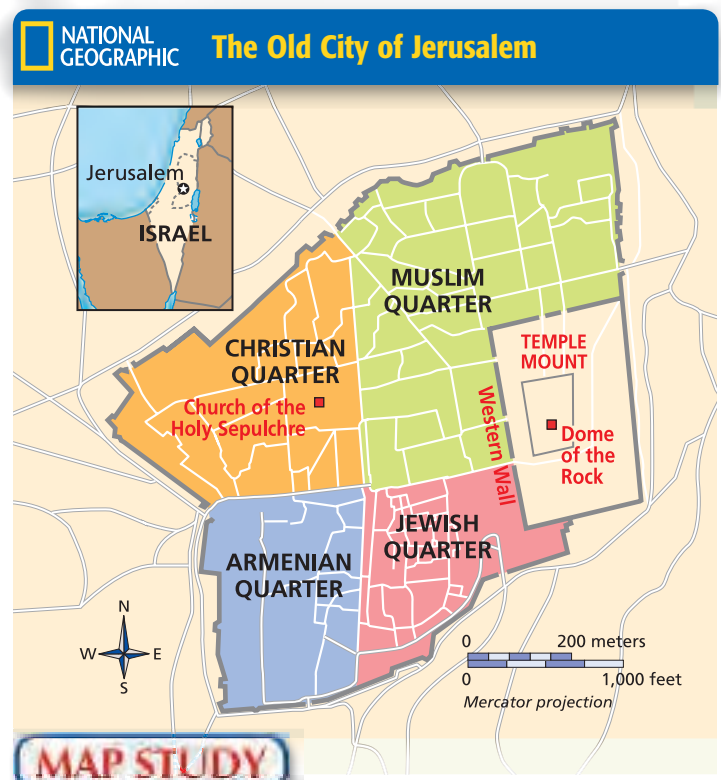
Judaism teaches obedience to God's laws and the creation of a just society. Jews recorded their history and examined it for meaning in the Hebrew Bible, consisting of the Torah, the prophets, and the sacred writings.

Christianity About A.D. 30, in the land of Israel, a Jewish teacher named Jesus began preaching and gathering followers. His followers said that those who believed in Jesus and followed his

teachings would be renewed and would go to heaven after death. After his death, the life and teachings of Jesus became the basis of a new religion—Christianity. The Christian Scriptures included the Hebrew Bible, which was called the Old Testament. The New Testament contained writings of the life and teachings of Jesus as well as the experiences of the earliest Christian communities.

Islam Islamic tradition states that in A.D. 610 revelations from God came to Muhammad, a merchant in the city of **Makkah (Mecca)** in the Arabian Peninsula. Muhammad began preaching that people should turn away from sin and worship the one true God. His followers claimed that he was the last in a line of **prophets**, or messengers, that included Abraham and Jesus.

By the A.D. 700s, Islam had spread through the region and into parts of Europe. Islam had profound religious, political, and cultural influences in these areas. One of the new features seen in the region's cities was the **mosque**, a house of worship where Muslims pray.



MAP STUDY

- 1. Location** In which quarters is the Western Wall located?
- 2. Place** What other sacred sites are located in more than one quarter?

Independence and Conflict

As the centuries passed, Islamic empires in the eastern Mediterranean rose and fell. Physical geography placed limits on the subregion's economic development. For example, empires in this subregion lacked resources such as minerals, wood, and coal to fuel an industrial revolution like that in Western Europe. By the late 1800s, Western European powers controlled large areas in the eastern Mediterranean.

Countries in this subregion gained independence around the time of World War II. Lebanon's independence from France came in 1943. Syria gained independence from the French and Jordan gained independence from the British in 1946.

Arab-Israeli Conflict After being expelled from their homeland by the Romans, Jews eventually settled in communities scattered all over the world, often experiencing persecution. In the late 1800s, many of these Jews, called Zionists, began to call for a return to Palestine, and some began to settle there.

After World War II, hostilities broke out in Palestine among Jews, Arabs, and British forces. Finally, the United Nations decided in 1947 to divide Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. When the British withdrew from Palestine, the Jews proclaimed the independent state of Israel in 1948. During the next 25 years, Arab opposition to Israel and Israel's concern for its security led to six wars in the region. In the 1948

and 1967 Arab-Israeli conflicts, victorious Israeli forces occupied Arab lands.

Israelis and Palestinians The wars that followed the birth of Israel forced many Palestinian Arabs to live as refugees in other lands. The status of the Palestinian refugees is an **ongoing** issue in the Arab-Israeli dispute. In addition, the Palestinians want an independent state of their own in the region.

In the 1990s, Israeli and Palestinian officials made some progress toward peace. Palestinians were moving closer to limited self-rule and to acknowledging Israel's right to exist as a nation. Israel was moving toward troop withdrawal and handing authority over the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the Palestinians. By 2002, the peace process had stalled. Yasir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, died in 2004. In 2006 the Islamic group Hamas won elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Defying moderate Palestinian leaders, Hamas opposed Israel and supported armed attacks on Israeli territory.

READING Check **Place** What right do both Jews and Arabs claim in Israel?

MAP STUDY

- Place** How did the size of Israel change between 1947 and 1967?
- Place** How did the size of Palestinian territories change between 1947 and 2006?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Israel and Palestine

Maps in Motion Use StudentWorks™ Plus or glencoe.com.





Culture

MAIN Idea The eastern Mediterranean’s religions and languages have influenced its art and everyday life for centuries.

GEOGRAPHY AND YOU How has religion affected everyday life in the United States? Read to learn about the influence of religion on art in the region.

The eastern Mediterranean produced three of the world’s most dominant religions.

Religion and Language

The majority of people who practice Islam in the subregion follow the Sunni branch of the religion, while Arabs in Syria and Lebanon follow the Shia branch.

Followers of Judaism and Christianity make up only a small percentage of the population. Most Jews in the area live in Israel. Large groups of Christians live in Lebanon and Syria, but they are still a minority.

Family life in this subregion usually includes the extended family and often involves religious worship. During Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, Muslims fast during daylight hours.

Western-style dress is becoming more common in this subregion, especially among Christian and Jewish women. However, many Muslims

dress modestly. Some Muslim women in the region wear a veil over their face and completely cover their hands and feet.

Although Hebrew is spoken in Israel, the primary language in all other areas is Arabic. Both Hebrew and Arabic are Semitic languages. English is also spoken in some areas.

Education and Health Care

Education in the subregion is compulsory and free, and the majority of young people attend school. However, literacy rates vary from 76 percent in Syria to 96 percent in Israel. Health care has improved in the subregion in recent decades. Hospitals are often government-owned.

The Arts

For thousands of years, the peoples of the subregion have expressed themselves through the arts and architecture. Artists and writers later found inspiration in religion.

Muslim scholars wrote about Islamic achievements and translated Greek writings into Arabic. These works later added to European knowledge about the ancient world. Syrian arts and scholarly works rivaled those of Mesopotamia and influenced Roman culture and thought.

READING Check **Regions** What branch of Islam do Arabs in Syria and Lebanon follow?

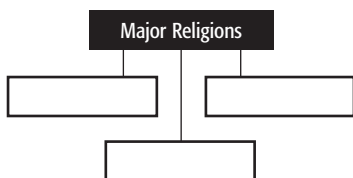
SECTION 2 REVIEW

Vocabulary

1. Explain the significance of: monotheism, prophet, mosque.

Main Ideas

2. Describe how migrations, claims to ancestral homes, and boundary disputes have influenced population patterns in the eastern Mediterranean.
3. How have languages influenced the art and everyday life of the eastern Mediterranean?
4. Use a web diagram like the one below to describe the three major religions that originated in the eastern Mediterranean and that continue to influence the region today.



Critical Thinking

5. How did the birth of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity influence the population patterns in the subregion?
6. **Identifying Cause and Effect** What are the main causes of conflict in the region today?
7. **Analyzing Visuals** Study the maps of Israel and Palestine on page 446. Has the West Bank ever been under Israeli control?

Writing About Geography

8. **Descriptive Writing** Write a letter to a friend describing the different ethnic groups in your community. Be sure to mention how these groups contribute to the community.

Geography **ONLINE**

Study Central™ To review this section, go to glencoe.com and click on Study Central.



WHY GEOGRAPHY MATTERS

CONFLICT: Israel and Palestine



The Problem:

Israelis and Palestinians each claim the same territory in Southwest Asia. After decades of uprisings, assassinations, attacks, failed peace agreements, and other struggles, conflict remains between these two groups attempting to coexist in the same area.



Separation These Israeli soldiers are patrolling the controversial barrier Israel constructed to protect itself from Palestinian terrorists. Eventually the barrier will completely separate the West Bank from Jerusalem.

Settler evicted from the Gaza Strip

Disengagement A woman cries in front of Israeli soldiers in the Gaza Strip settlement of Kfar Darom, where settlers have been evicted as part of Israel's disengagement plan.



Disputed Lands: Israel and Palestine



Attempts at Peace

At the heart of the conflict lie the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem. East Jerusalem is the most disputed territory, as it is home to some of the holiest sites in the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian faiths. Israel claims a united Jerusalem as its capital, but this claim is not recognized by many nations. The Palestinians, on the other hand, want East Jerusalem to become the capital of their future country. Both sides have failed to reach agreement on the status of the city.

What are some of the attempts at peace?

In 1993 a plan known as the Oslo Accords was enacted. This plan allowed for limited Palestinian self-rule in areas occupied by Israel, including the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) was established in 1994 to control security-related and civilian issues in the Palestinian urban areas. Both sides hoped that the accords would lead to a two-state solution in which both groups could be secure in their borders and rights. In 2005 Israel carried out a disengagement plan, removing all of its military and settlers from the Gaza Strip and some cities in the West Bank.

What is the current state of the region? Since the completion of the disengagement, conditions have deteriorated. In 2006 Hamas won control of the PNA. Hamas refuses to recognize Israel and has called for violence against the country. Israel has refused to have any dealings with the Hamas-led Palestinian government. As long as this animosity continues, peace in the region will be threatened.

Term	Meaning
Hamas	a Palestinian Sunni Islamist organization founded in 1987
Palestinian National Authority	an interim administrative organization established in 1994 that nominally governs parts of the West Bank and all of the Gaza Strip, areas known as the Palestinian Territories
Road Map for Peace	a plan outlined by the "quartet"—the United States, European Union, United Nations, and Russia—that calls for an independent Palestinian state coexisting in peace with an Israeli state

One Solution:

Many feel that the only solution may be the creation of an independent country of Palestine. In 2003, U.S. President George W. Bush called for an independent Palestinian state living in peace with Israel. Most recently, the Road Map for Peace was published as the next step in the peace process.



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert (left) meets with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas at a conference in Petra, Jordan, in 2006.

THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY

- Human Systems** Why is Jerusalem such an important city to both the Palestinians and the Israelis?
- Places and Regions** Look at the main picture. Several separation barriers have been built along Israeli and Palestinian territorial borders. Why do you think these barriers were built? What purpose do they serve?

NORTH AFRICA, SOUTHWEST ASIA, AND CENTRAL ASIA