

GEOG 247 Cultural Geography

The Geographies of Race and Ethnicity

Part 1

Prof. Anthony Grande
Hunter College-CUNY
©AFG 2017

Lecture design, content and presentation GAFG 1017. Individual images and illustrations may be subject to other copyrights.

Smithsonian Institute Exhibit on Diversity in America

Chapter 8 Openstax
Fundamentals of The Human Music, Second Edition
© 2014 W. H. Freeman and Company

Smithsonian Institution Collections, National Museum of American History, Behring Center

FBI Mug Shot Collection

Can we identify these people by their physical and cultural characteristics?
What are their origins/backgrounds?
What are their cultures?
Where are their geographic concentrations/distributions?
Can we determine paths of diffusion?

3

Terminology

We need to differentiate between

Race and Ethnicity

4

Key Terms

❖ **RACE**: a largely unscientific classification system developed in the 1700s in Europe based on human appearance: e.g., hair, skin tone, eye color, bodily proportions, stature, etc.

It was used through the late 1900s.

5

Key Terms

In the 1800s, four categories were created by anthropologists based on skin color and facial characteristics.

Caucasoid -- Negroid -- Mongoloid -- Australoid

Now the term "race" is used by some people to easily:

- ✓ Categorize by using genetically significant differences (if any) found among human populations, or to
- ✓ Categorize people by visible differences in human physiognomy (as in criminal justice), or as
- ✓ An identifier (social construction) that varies across time (historic period; usage) and space (location on earth; as part of language) when studying populations.

6

"Race"

- ❖ **Race does not exist on a scientific level**, despite influence of the theory.
- **Biological variation is real.** We are of all different shapes, sizes and colors just like flowers.
- **Race is a product of the human mind, not nature.**

- ❖ **There is just one human species** (*homo sapiens*).
- **Scientifically there is very little fundamental genetic variety between humans:**
 - There is no way to tell where one category stops and another begins.
 - **Race is literally skin deep.** There hasn't been enough time in human history for much genetic variation.
- **Humans do not have "subspecies."**

7

Key Terms

- ❖ **ETHNICITY: A common characteristic of humans**; a shared ancestry, language, national background and/or cultural traditions.
- ❖ **ETHNIC GROUP: A group of people who share a common characteristics**, as ancestry and cultural tradition, often living as a minority group in a larger society (as opposed to a majority group which is termed "indigenous" or "native" to an area).

8

MAPPING PEOPLE: Their Location, Diffusion and DNA

- If subspecies (races) existed each group could be traced back to a **different** common ancestor or past.
- **Genetic mixing** is so common and complete that most geographers dismiss race as a category **since it can not be clearly tied to place.**
- National Geographic's **Genographic Project** uses DNA samples to map and prove that all humans descended from a group of Africans who began to disperse c.60,000 years ago.
- **The global mosaic can be traced to specific journeys and routes.**

https://shop.nationalgeographic.com/category/geno-dna/united-states?code=EM101217D&utm_source=NatGeo.com&utm_medium=Email&utm_content=naestore_20171012&utm_campaign=Store&utm_ref=675002325 - NatGeoStore DNA Kit

<https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/>
<https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/human-journey/>
<https://genographic.nationalgeographic.com/science-behind/>

9

Global Mosaic

AFTER ALL,

it's a small world.

..... SO WE SHOULD GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weZqrN9Jp0>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9YqCP_B7EU

10

More Terms

❖ ACCULTURATION Adoption by an ethnic group of enough of the ways of the host society to be able to function economically & socially.	❖ ASSIMILATION The complete blending of an ethnic group into the host society resulting in the loss of all distinctive ethnic traits.
---	---

SEQUENCE SCENARIO

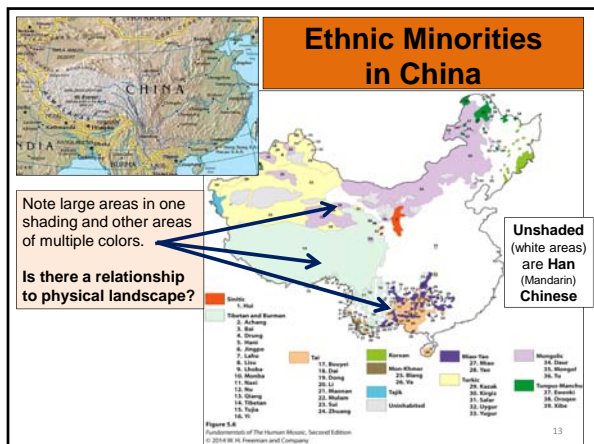
- Newly-arrived immigrants tend to cling to their old ways (may exist in isolation).
- In time, they start speaking, dressing, eating and associating with people outside of their group (acculturation begins).
- Eventually (maybe after a generation or two) they lose (or abandon) the ways of their ancestors and blend into local society so that they no longer stand out (assimilation has occurred). *Note: some religious, language, culinary, rights-of-passage, customs, etc. preferences may be retained.*

11

Ethnic Terminology

- ❖ **Ethnic Homelands**
Sizable areas inhabited by an ethnic minority that exhibit a strong sense of attachment to the region; they often exercise some measure of political and/or social control over it.
- ❖ **Ethnic Islands**
Small ethnic areas in the countryside; also called *folk islands*; surrounded by people of other ethnicities.
- ❖ **Ethnic Substrate**
Regional cultural distinctiveness that remains following assimilation of an ethnic homeland; as decorations, holiday celebrations and cuisine preference. Creates individuality and a link to the past.

12



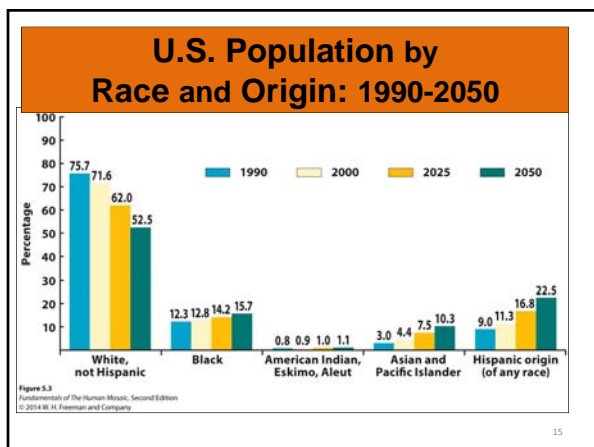
Race/Ethnicity in the U.S.

- **Race is still the most common way people self-identify, despite its problems.**
- **Ethnicity is next but because of time-distance decay may be less strong with each generation.**

➤ **Both labels are the basis for much segregation (real and potential)**

- Ethnic neighborhoods (forced or choice)
- Public housing
- Both race and ethnicity convey mental stereotypes

14



Race/Ethnicity in the U.S.

Census forms highlight the problems of defining race.

What is the correct terminology?

How should people of more than one race be identified?

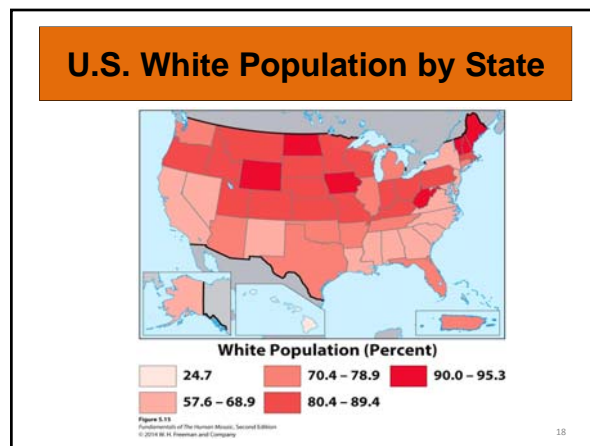
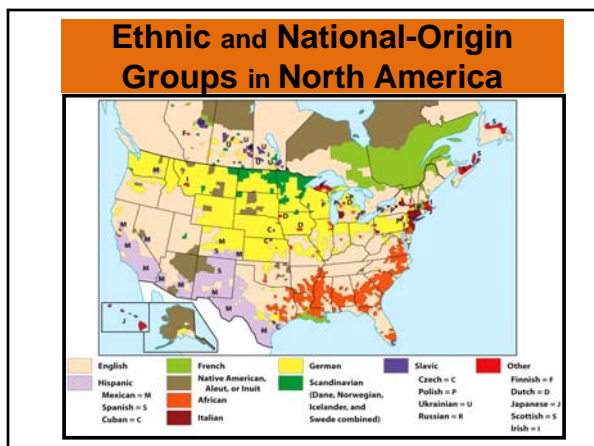
Why single out Hispanics for ethnic/racial detail?

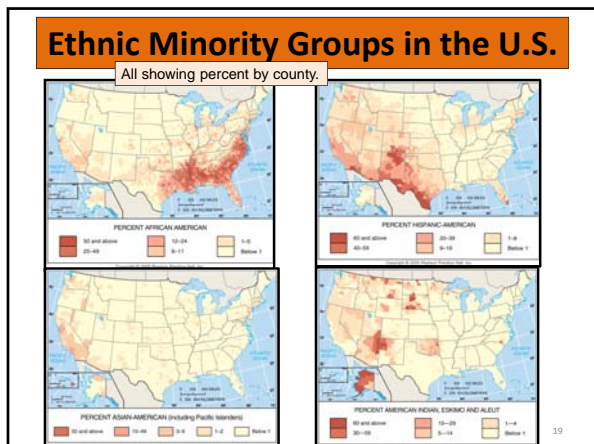
Then, how are the census report numbers interpreted and used?

What happens when different terminology is used (apples and oranges)?

How do we compare data?

16





More Key Terms

❖ **NATIONALISM:**

1. A conscious sense of **awareness, identification and loyalty**, exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on the **promotion of its culture** and interests as opposed to those of other states; **related to ethnicity.**
2. An **identification with the goals** of a country that binds its people together.

EXAMPLES

- **Rise of nationalities**
 - Nation-states
 - Ethnic pride
- **Multinational states**
 - Former Soviet Union
 - Civil unrest between ethnic groups
- **Revival of ethnic identity**
 - Ethnicity and self-rule
 - Rebirth/historic roots
 - Ethnic cleansing

We will come back to this in the next chapter which deals with the political aspects of culture.

20

Ethnicities and Political Units in Africa

There are hundreds of ethnic groups in Africa.

Few if any of the ethnic homelands correspond to present-day political boundaries.

The “racial divides” between North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and southern Africa also do not match political borders.

Copyright © 2005 Pearson Prentice Hall, Inc.

The boundaries of African states do not coincide with its thousands of ethnic groups.

22

Studying Ethnicity Geographically

❖ *Ethnic geography is the study of the spatial aspects of ethnicity.*

➤ **Cultural geographers:**

- ✓ Identify ethnic regions
- ✓ Look into ethnic diffusion and interaction
- ✓ Delve into the relationship between people and their environment (ecology) and
- ✓ Differentiate ethnic landscapes.

22

Homeland

What is homeland?

What are its other names?

Mother country
Fatherland
Place of one's birth
Native soil
Home sod

❖ **Ethnic homeland is a region occupied by a:**

- ✓ people with common ancestry
- ✓ who have developed a distinct culture, and
- ✓ whose interaction with the environment over time has created a visible, recognizable landscape that is now associated with them.

➤ These visible recognizable cultural characteristics can be transferred to a another area (*diffusion*) when the group moves (*migrates*) to a new location and settles (*concentrates*) there.

Regional Ethnic Ecology, Interaction, Diffusion and Landscape


Which image is a real Dutch setting?

"Ethnic" Homeland

Occupants have characteristics that are different from groups in nearby areas (*uniqueness*). Homeland area can be considered a *hearth* for the group.

Historically, **outsiders** - as a means of control of areas not theirs - **have divided homeland regions, imposed foreign control and instituted rules and regulations (laws) that may not be acceptable to the native culture group.**


Kurds



- Kurds are a non-Arab ethnic group
- Kurds primarily live in Turkey, Iraq, Syria & Iraq
- They were their own homeland's population
- Their religion is primarily Sunni Muslim
- Spoken Kurdish (related to Farsi)

It is said that geography defines the Kurdish people.


- Their homeland is a mountainous region making them culturally unique.
- Their homeland was split between 4 independent countries after WW I.
- They do not form the majority in any of the countries.



25

Homelands and Politics

The unification of a homeland for the **Kurds** (creation of Kurdistan) **was prevented** after WW I by European powers who drew political borders through the area, to **lessen the power of a unified people.**



Yugoslavia was created after WW I to make the small Balkan countries more powerful as a unit. It officially recognized 6 of its member states (or "republics") as homelands. In the late 1980s separatist movements developed in each of the homelands and Yugoslavia split into separate units.



26

Ethnic Regions in Yugoslavia

The Balkans in 1914



Levels of Ottoman Empire:
 Independent 1611-1622
 Independent 1678
 Lost to Austria-Hungary 1699
 Independent 1839
 Ottoman Empire 1839-1908
 Yugoslavia 1918-1991
 Disappeared 1989


The Balkans in 1994



Legend:
 Albanians, Croats, Macedonians, Muslims, Serbians, Slovenians, Hungarians, Montenegrins, Bosnians, No permanent majority

Copyright © 2005 Pearson Prentice Hall, Inc. 27

Tribal "Homelands" in the Republic of South Africa



CREATED HOMELANDS


- Bophuthatswana
- Ciskei
- Transkei
- Venda

PROPOSED HOMELANDS

- Ovambos
- Gazankulu
- KwaZulu
- Lebowa
- Ndebele
- Swazi

Copyright © 2005 Pearson Prentice Hall, Inc. 28

Ethnic Homelands and Islands of North America



❖ **North America is composed of ethnic homelands (native populations) and ethnic islands (immigrant populations who established themselves in certain areas).**

➢ Both exist in various states of vitality.

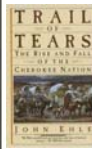
❖ **Moribund ethnic homeland:** unique area that was once thriving but now is in decline or is a remnant (relic) area. Clues as to who was there remain on the landscape.

What are the clues?

29

Homeland of the Cherokee Indian Nation





30

