Geography of Language & Religion

Understanding Religions

- At their base understanding a religion is a set of ideas tied together under the belief in some type of divine being, a guiding set of morality, and a belief in an afterlife
  - Guiding principles for follower to live by give direction and how the religion should be practiced
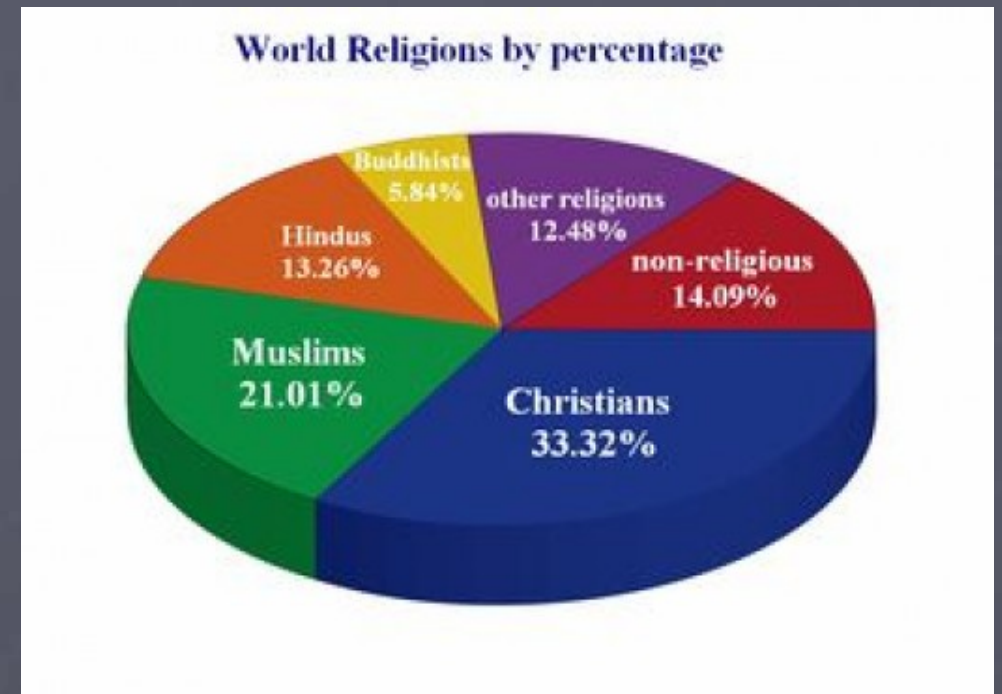
Polytheistic and Monotheistic Religions

- Religions can be divided based on their structure in the belief of one god (monotheism) or their belief in many gods (polytheism)
  - Monotheistic religions offer greater cultural cohesion as cults or sects can develop around different gods within a polytheistic society

Universalizing and Ethnic Religions

- **Universalizing religions** are open to all and will actively seek converts to join their religion
  - Islam and Christianity are main examples and because of this they are also the largest religions world wide
- Ethnic religion the members are born into it and the religious ideas are connected to their ethnicity.
  - Hinduism and Judaism are common examples of ethnic religions. Judaism remains rather small, whereas Hinduism is quite large due to its large population in India

World Religions by percentage

- Buddhists 5.84%
- other religions 12.48%
- non-religious 14.09%
- Hindus 13.26%
- Christians 33.32%
- Muslims 21.01%

Diffusion of Islam

Folk Religions and Animism

- Folk cultures often have site specific religious beliefs tied to their environment they have often adopted unique religions beliefs and practices that are specific to their culture only

- Many are animistic, meaning they attribute supernatural powers to plants, animals, and inanimate objects
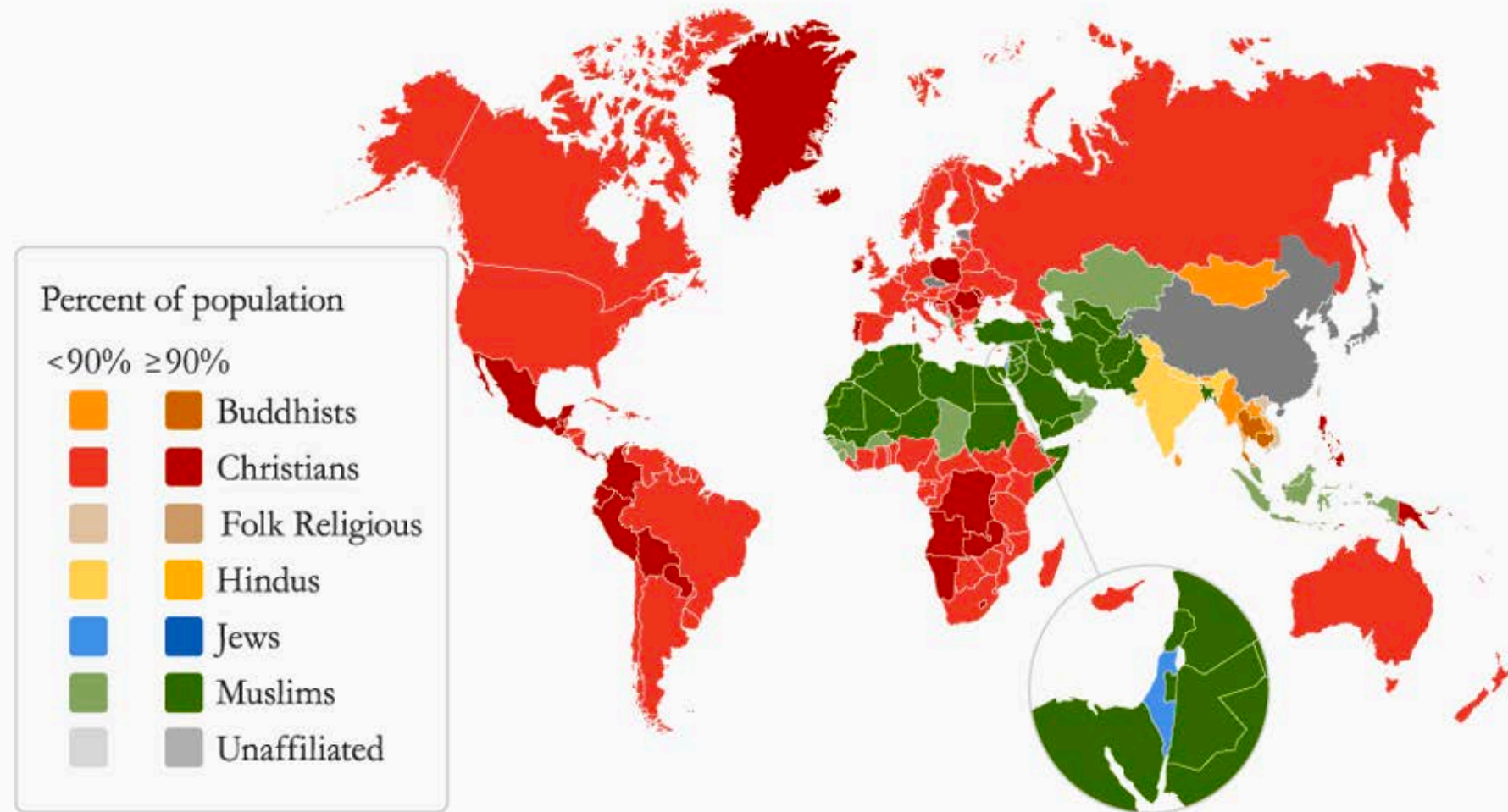 - Example – Mongolian Mythology had a sky god, horse god, etc…
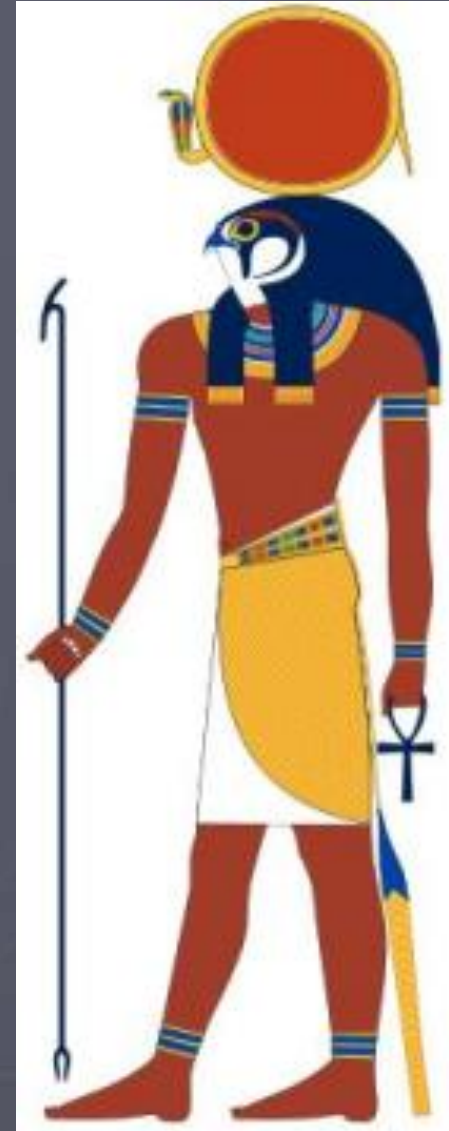
Branches, Denominations, and Sects

- Branch – Large divisions of religions based on structural beliefs (ex. division of Islam between Shi'a and Sunni or Christianity (Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox)

- Denomination – Further separation of Religious branches (ex. Splitting Orthodox Christianity between Eastern and Greek Orthodox denominations)

- Sect – A further division a religious denomination who develop specific but fundamental differences than the rest of the main practice (Ex. The "Old Believers" in Eastern Orthodox church)
  - Sometimes considered to be derogatory

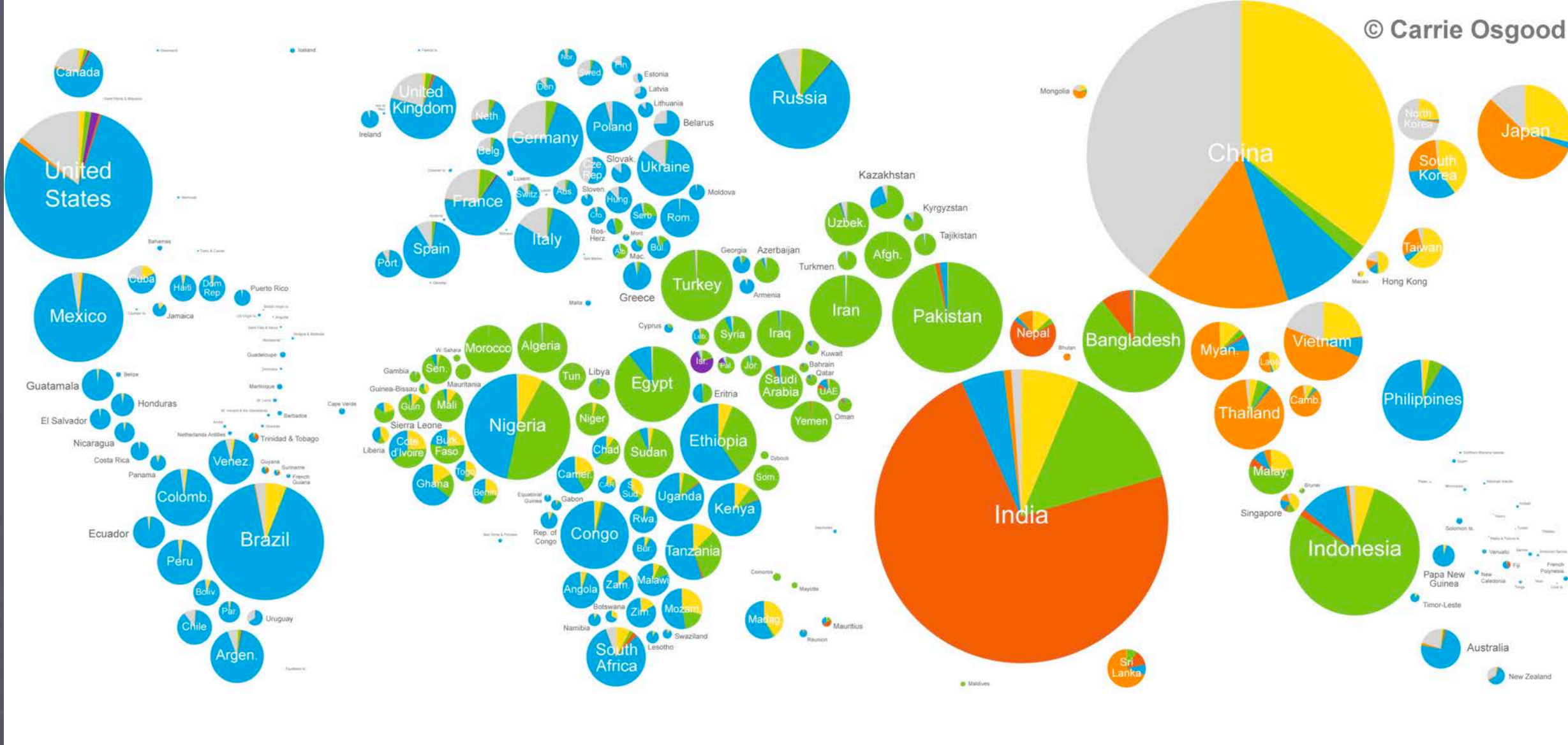# The largest religious groups worldwide

Largest religions by country in 2010 (darker colour represents greater prevalence)

Percent of population

<90% ≥90%

Buddhists
Christians
Folk Religious
Hindus
Jews
Muslims
Unaffiliated

INDEPENDENT   statista

© Carrie Osgood

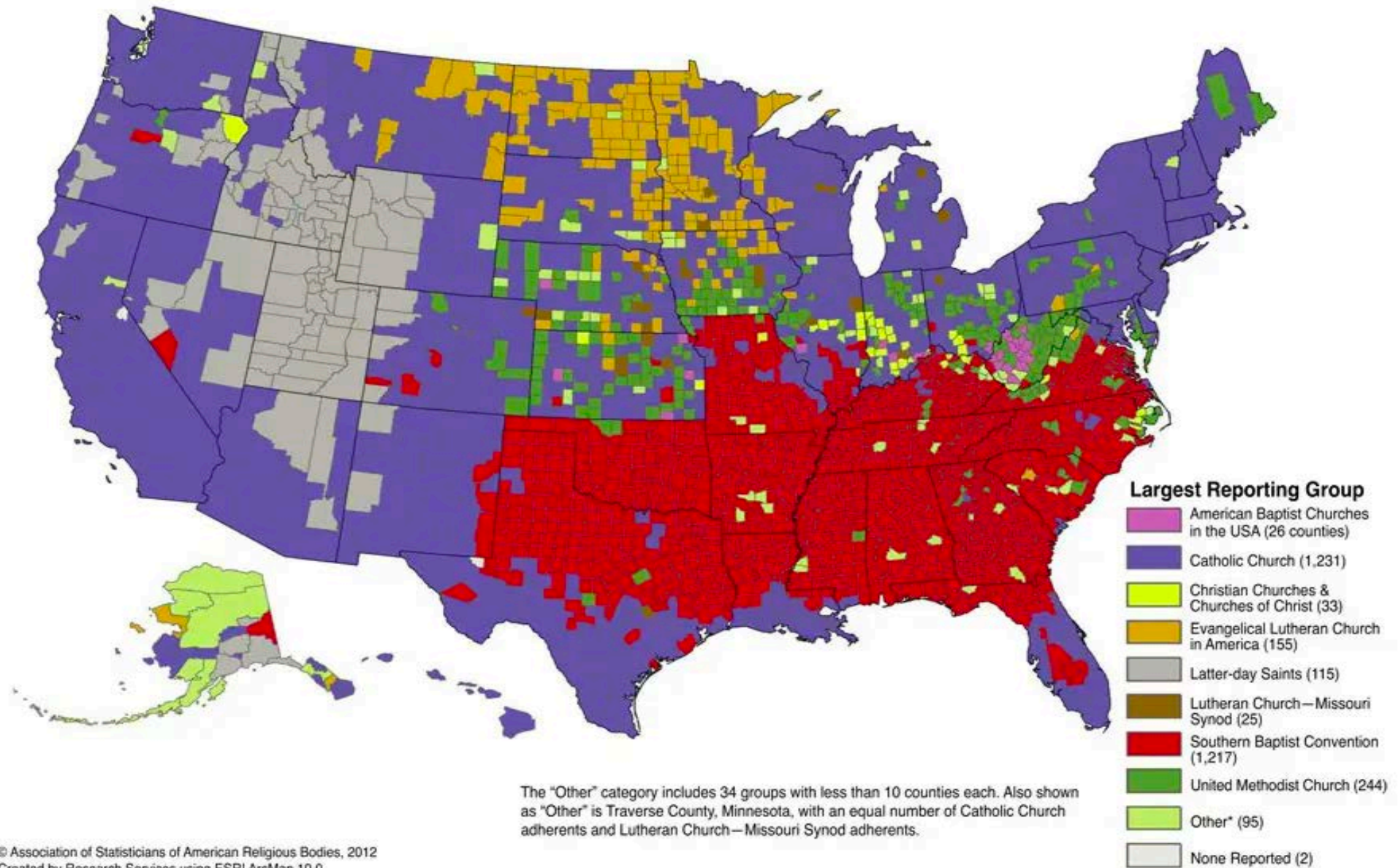| Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	
11.8%	7.2%	32.8%	13.8%	22.5%	11.8%

Atheist/Agnostic 0.2% Other

Largest Participating Religious Group
Group with the Largest Number of Adherents by County, 2010

2010 U.S. Religion Census: Religious Congregations & Membership Study · www.USReligionCensus.org

Largest Reporting Group

- American Baptist Churches in the USA (26 counties)
- Catholic Church (1,231)
- Christian Churches & Churches of Christ (33)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (155)
- Latter-day Saints (115)
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (25)
- Southern Baptist Convention (1,217)
- United Methodist Church (244)
- Other* (95)
- None Reported (2)

The "Other" category includes 34 groups with less than 10 counties each. Also shown as "Other" is Traverse County, Minnesota, with an equal number of Catholic Church adherents and Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod adherents.

© Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2012
Created by Research Services using ESRI ArcMap 10.0

Components of Language

Defining Language

- Pronunciation and combination of words used to communicate within a group of people
    - **Dialects**: Minor variations of a language
   - **Lingua franca**: Current language of international discourse

Types of Language

- Verbal
  - The spoken communication following a formal and informal structure
    - Grammar and Slang
- Written
  - The formalized system of symbols representing sounds used to record language
- Kinesics
  - Nonverbal language system using a series of recognizable gestures, facial expressions, and even eye contact
- Paralanguage
  - Verbalized accompaniments of language including slurs, tones of voice, and non-meaningful utterances (ex. um, ah, shhhh)

Isogloss

- Geographic Boundaries of a language
  - Defined by linguists who determine differing speech patterns
    - Ex. "you guys" vs. y'all

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Case Study: Pop vs. everyone who is wrong
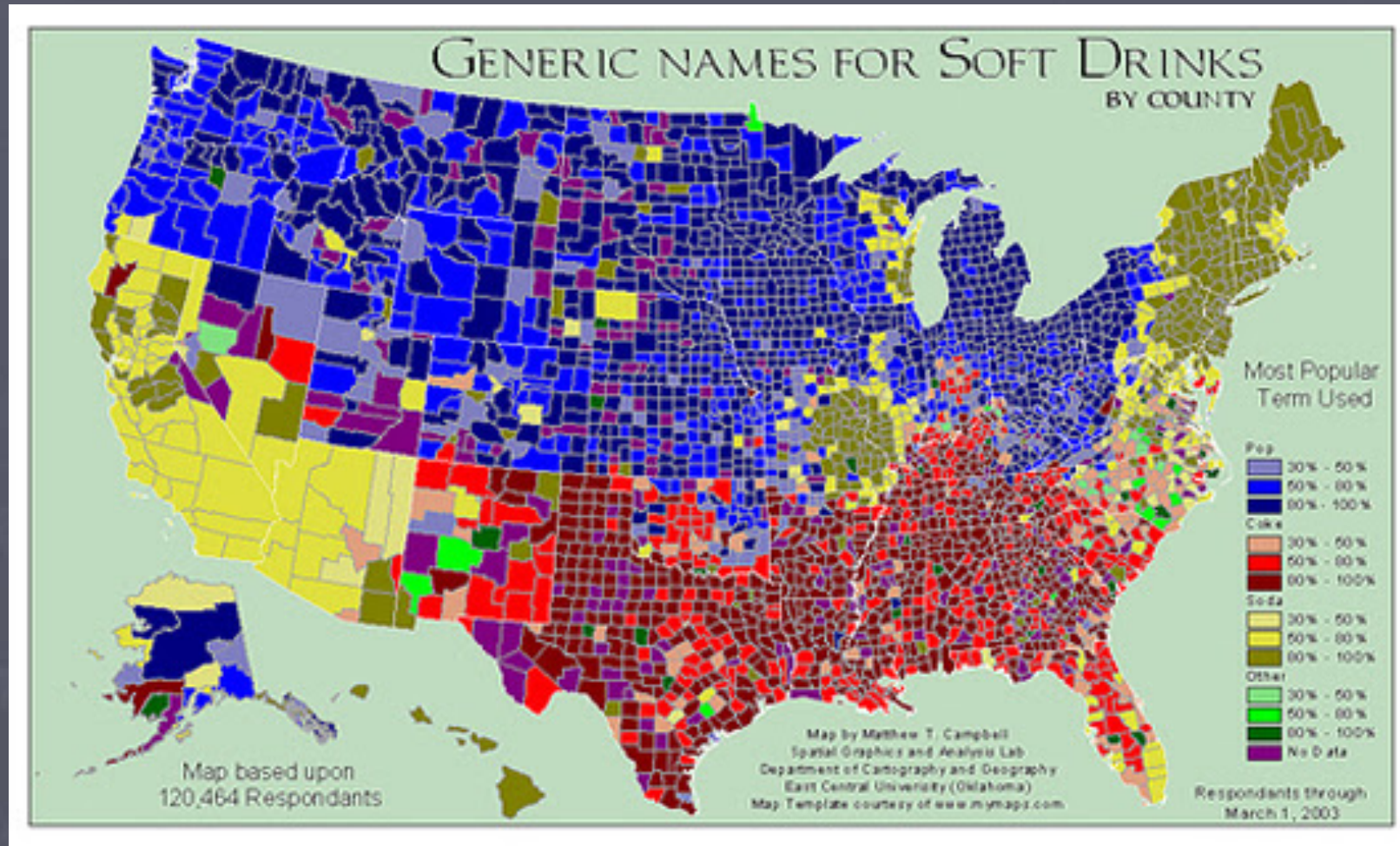
Linguistic Majorities

- Worldwide over 3000 different languages spoken
  - 50% speaks the top 12 languages
  - Mandarin has the most
  - English is most widespread

TABLE 7-1 The World's Leading Languages and the Number of Speakers of Each (in millions)

| Language	Native speakers	Total speakers
Mandarin	885	1,075
Hindi	375	496
Spanish	358	425
English	350	514
Arabic	211	256
Bengali	210	215
Portuguese	178	194
Russian	165	275
Japanese	125	126
German	100	128
French	77	129
Malay-Indonesian	58	176

Note: A native speaker is one for whom the language is his or her first language.

Source: U.S. Department of State

Linguistic Development

- **Protolanguage**: Evolution of current languages from a common root
- **Language family**: Languages related by descent from a common protolanguage
  - Members of the same language family may not be mutually intelligible
    - Ex. English speakers can not easily understand German even though they are in the same language family
- **Cognates**: Words with common etymological origins
  - i.e. Tsar (Russians), Kaiser (German) from Caesar (Latin)
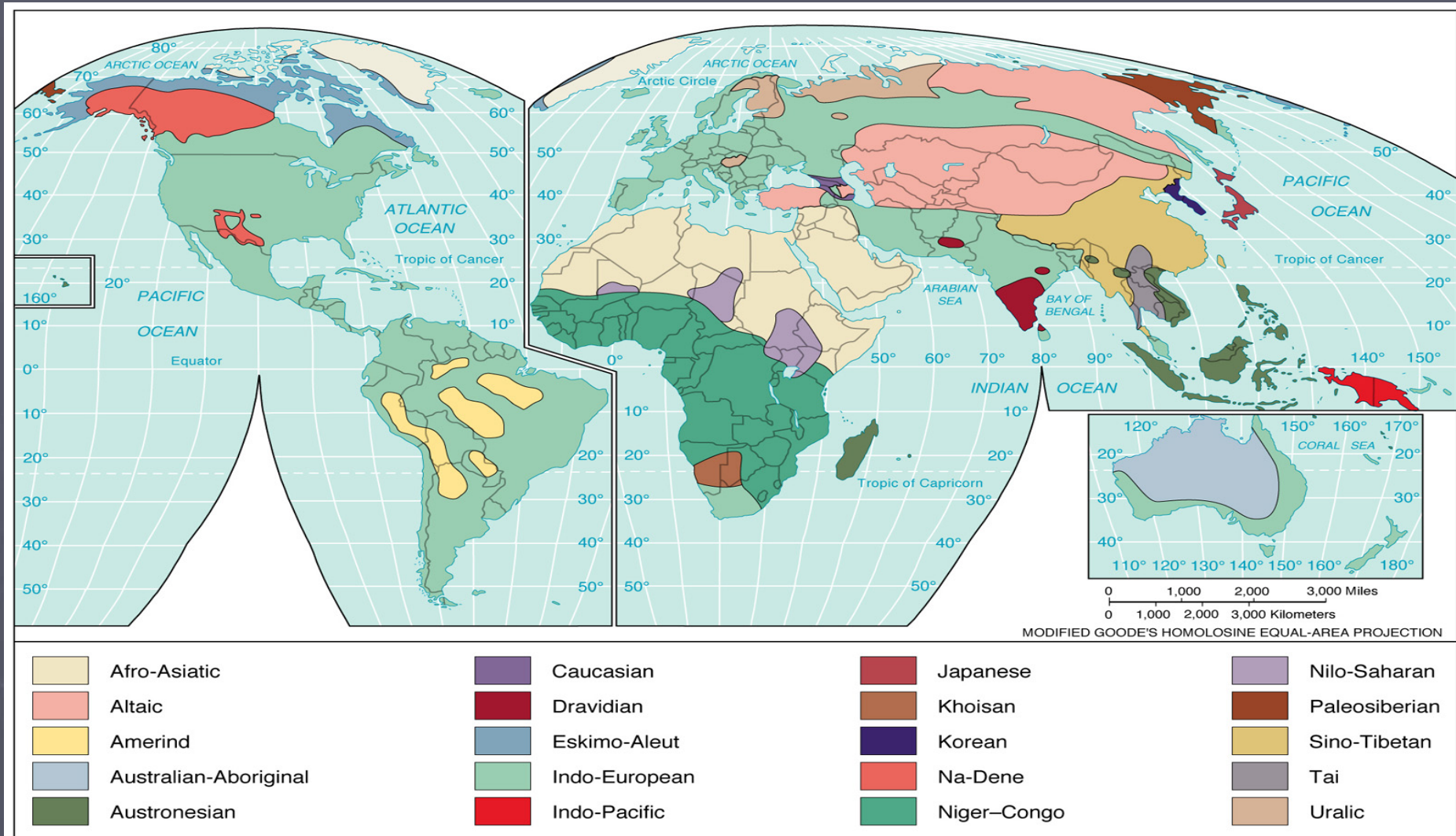 - **Etymology**: Study of word origins and changes

Evolution of Proto-Indo-European Language
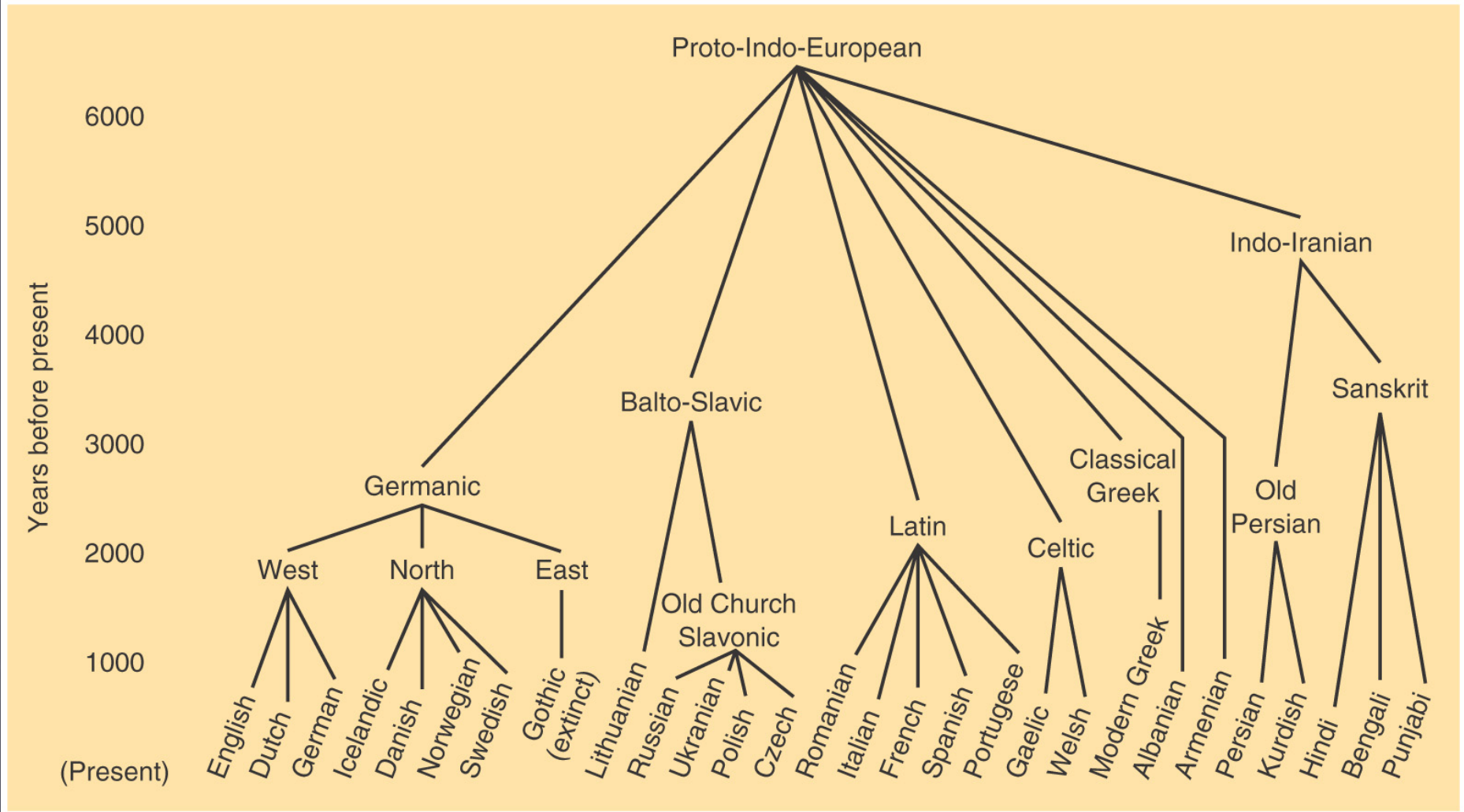
Indo-European Linguistic Diffusion
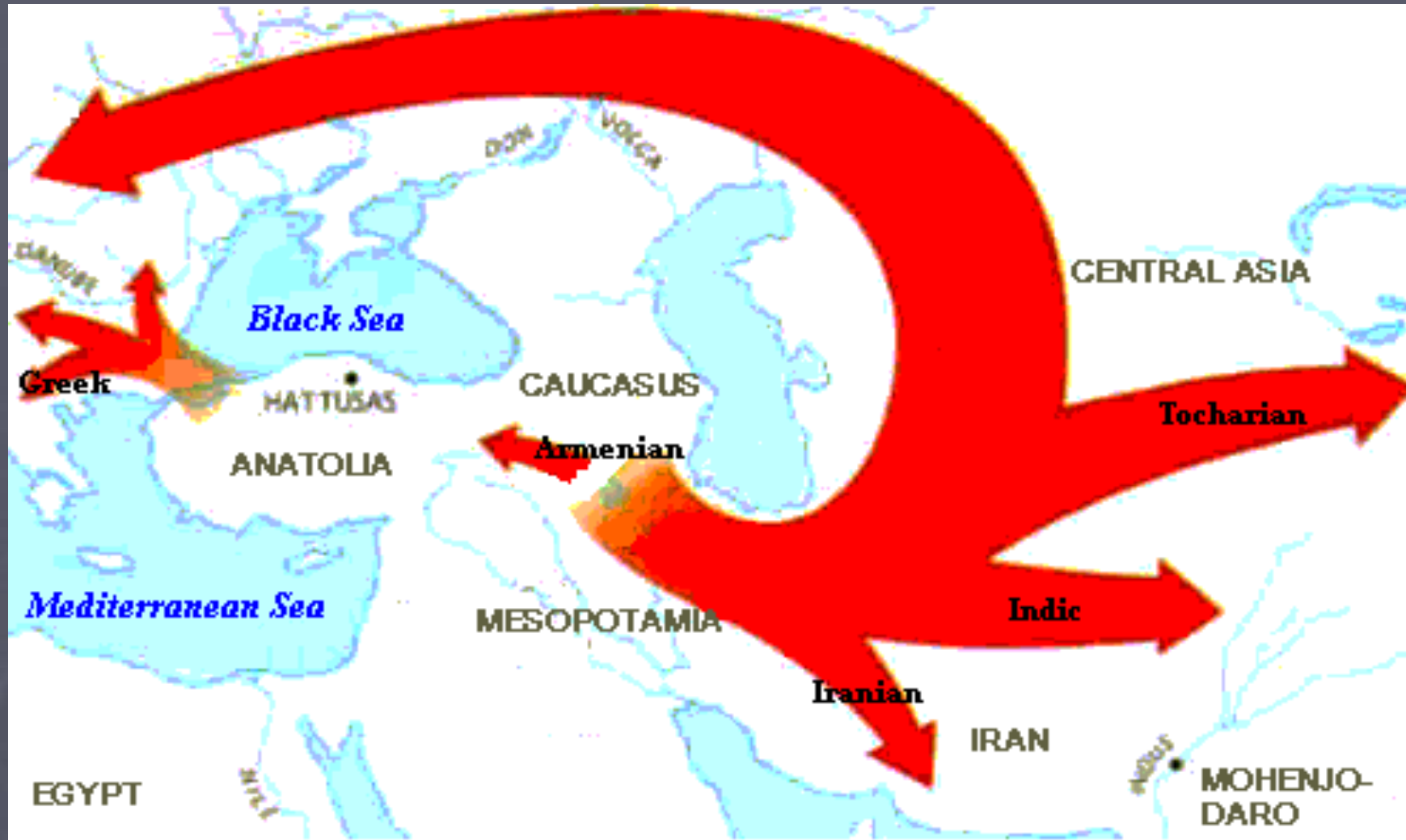
Language Families

Language and Cultural Identity

- Language is a unifying factor leading to greater cultural cohesion
- Linguistic similarities lead to formation of identity
  - Ex. French people speak French, and Texans have a "Texan" accent
  - Some countries go so far as to establish official languages
    - Ex. Canada's official languages are English and French
  - Acceptance into a cultural group sometimes dependent on language acquisition
    - Ex. French do not accept French Canadians as similar due to language differences
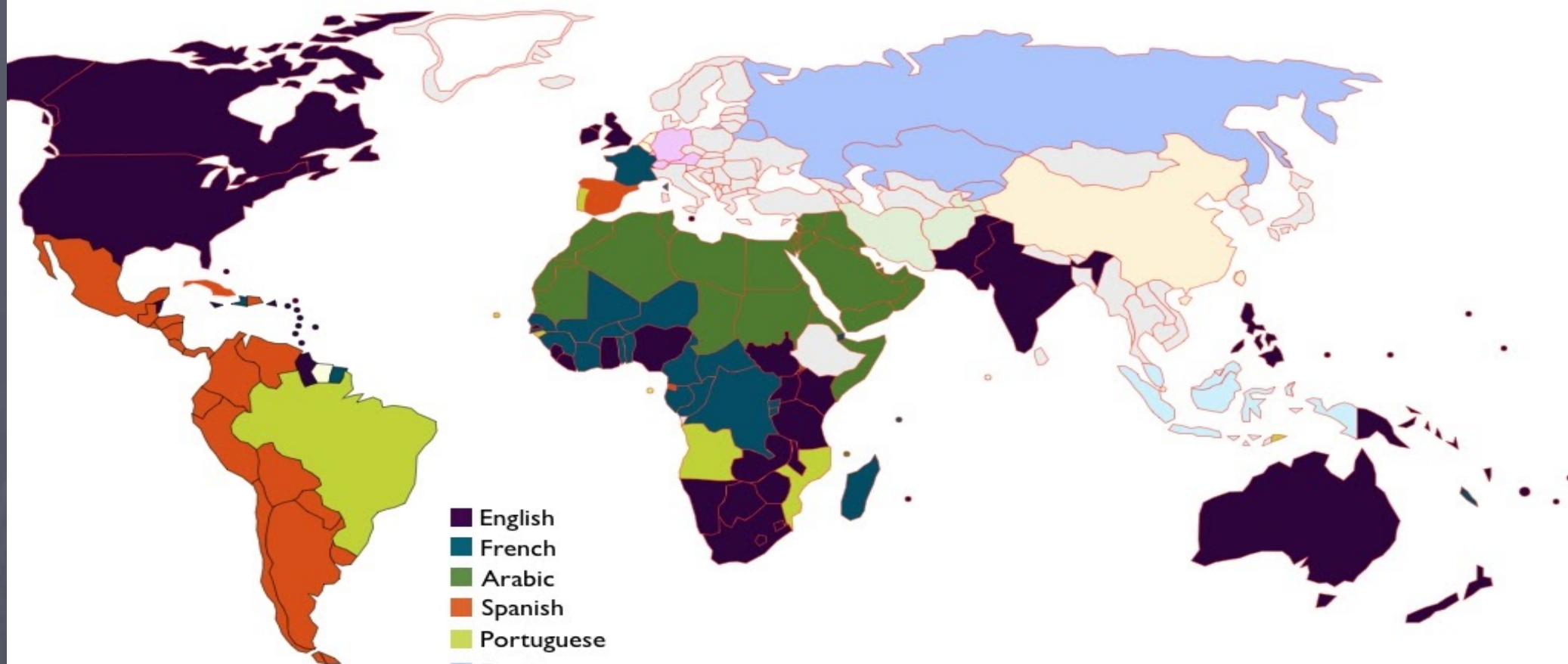
Language and National Identity

- Official languages
  - Language in which government business is conducted
    - Monolingual have one official language while multilingual has more than one
- Postcolonial societies
  - Imposed official languages by colonial ruler

International Languages with Official National Status*

English
French
Arabic
Spanish
Portuguese
Russian
Malay (Indonesian/Malaysian)
German
Mandarin Chinese
Persian
Dutch/Flemish

Note: In regard to small islands, only sovereign states are depicted on the base map, not exclaves such as Guadeloupe, or dependencies, such as the Falklands (Malvinas).

* de jure or de facto; official status in at least three internationally recognized sovereign states

Note: For countries with more than one official language noted on the map (such as Belgium, Chad, and Vanuatu), the most widely used of those languages is depicted.

Toponomy

- The study of place names

- Consists of:
  - Natural features
  - Origins/values of inhabitants
  - Belief structures, religions
  - Current or past heroes

Communist era name	Previous and now restored name
Andropov	Rybinsk
Brezhnev	Naberezhnye Chelny
Chernenko	Sharypovo
Frunze	Bishkek
Georgiu-Dezh	Lisky
Gorky	Nizhny Novgorod
Gotvald	Zmiev
Kalinin	Tver
Kuibyshev	Samara
Kirovbad	Gyanja
Leninabad	Khodjent
Leningrad	St. Petersburg
Mayakovsky	Bagdati
Ordzhonikidze	Vladikavkaz
Sverdlovsk	Yekaterinburg
Voroshilovgrad	Lugansk
Zhdanov	Mariupol

Case Study: Nebraska