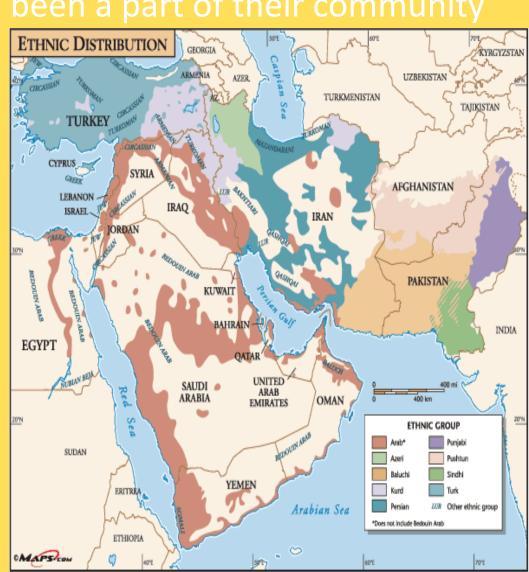
Ethnic Groups

An ethnic group is a group of people who share cultural ideas and beliefs that have been a part of their community

for generations.

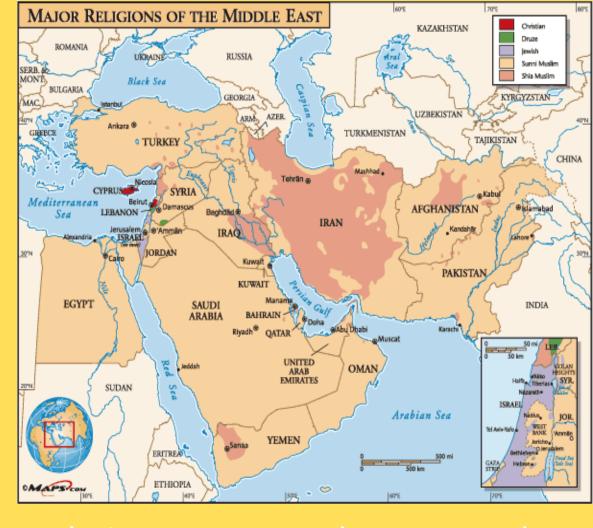
The characteristics they may have in common could included a language, a religion, a shared history, types of foods, and a set of traditional stories, beliefs, or celebrations.

These things make up a common culture shared by those in a particular ethnic group.



Religious Groups

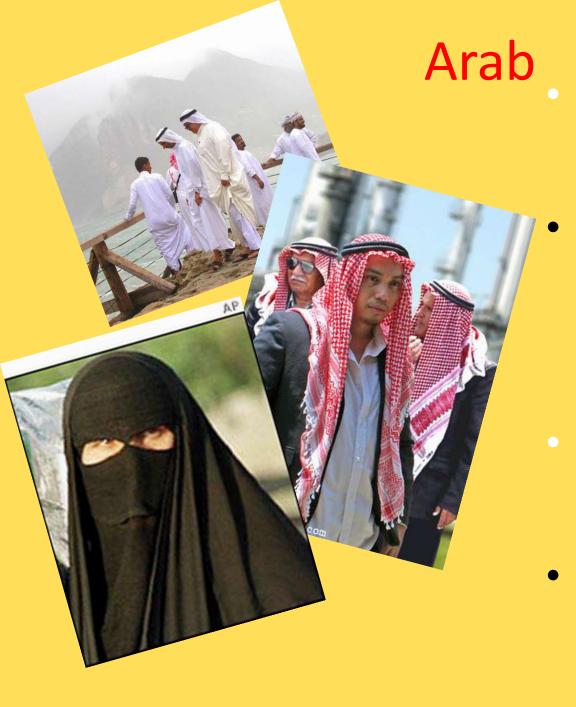
 A religious group shares a share a belief system, in a god or gods, with a specific set of rituals and literature.



People from different ethnic groups may share
same religion; through they may be from very different
cultures.

Arabs

- Southwest Asia is home to many different ethnic groups who share similar religions.
- The Arabs of Southwest Asia believe themselves to be descendants of Abraham in the Bible, through his son Ishmael.
- They make up the majority of those who live throughout the region known as the Middle East, though there are many differences among them.
- Most Arabs practice the religion of Islam and call themselves Muslims.



 Arabs comprise most of the population of Southwest Asia.

 However, many Arabs also live in Northern Africa, Canada, Europe, and the US.

 Most Arabs practice Islam and speak Arabic.

 Small numbers of Arabs practice other religions.

- Those who call themselves Muslims are further divided, as some call themselves Sunni Muslims, while others are Shia Muslims.
- Some Arabs are Christians.

 Most Arabs, whether they are Muslim or Christian, speak the Arabic language.



Persians

- Persians are those who live in the modern country of Iran. The country of Persia became known as Iran after World War I.
- The Persian people are descended from a different group than those who are Arabs and Jews. Their ancestors were Indo-Europeans from Central Europe and Southern Russia.
- Persians, or Iranians, speak Farsi, a language that uses the Arabic alphabet but is actually a different language.
- They practice Islam, but most belong to the Shia group of Muslims.

Persian

- Persians make up about half of Iran's current population.
- They have their own language called Persian or Farsi.
- Most Persians in Iran today practice Shi'a Islam, but some are Sunni and other religions.
- Persian women have faced many challenges as a result of strict cultural and religious practices.



Kurds

The Kurds are an ethnic group that are found in the mountainous areas where Syria, Turkey, Iran, and Iraq come together.

Many Kurds hope to have a nation o their own some day, a hope that has caused conflict with the countries in which Kurdish people live.

Most Kurds are Sunni Muslim, though there is a small minority who are Shia Muslims.





Kurdish

The Kurds see themselves as a distinct ethnic group from others in the area.

They speak their own language, known as Kurdish, and have a separate history, literature, music, and set of traditions.

 Almost one-fifth of the population of Turkey is Kurdish.

Kurdish Muslims are usually less strict about certain Islamic practices.

For example, there are fewer laws for how Kurdish women should dress than there are for Iranian and Arab women.

- Kurds share many aspects of their culture with Iranians.
- Persecuted by Sadam Husain