

the middle of the state of Romania, but it has not always been that way. For two centuries, Hungary's borders stretched far enough east to incorporate Transylvania into the state of Hungary. The Transylvania region today is populated by Romanians and by Hungarians, and both states claim a desire and a right to control the territory. Both states have places within Transylvania that they see as pivotal to the histories of their nations. The desire to control the territory and to stretch the Hungarian state in order to mesh with what Hungarians see as the Hungarian nation requires the movement of state borders. White explains how important territory is to a nation: "The control and maintenance of territory is as crucial as the control and maintenance of a national language, religion, or a particular way of life. Indeed, a language, religion or way of life is difficult to maintain without control over territory." In the case of Romania and Hungary, and in similar states

where the identity of the nation is tied to a particular territory, White explains that nations will defend their territories as strongly as they defend their "language, religion, or way of life."

Another complication that arises from the lack of fit between nations and states is that some nations do not have a state; they are **stateless nations**. The Palestinians are an example of a stateless nation. In the 1990s, the Palestinian Arabs gained control over fragments of territory ("the Occupied Territories") that may form the foundations of a future state, but most of the 6.5 million Palestinians continued to live in Israel and several other countries, including Jordan (2.1 million), Lebanon (400,000), and Syria (350,000).

A much larger stateless nation is that of the over 20 million Kurds who live in an area called Kurdistan that covers parts of six states (Fig. 8.6). In the aftermath of

Figure 8.6

Kurdish region of the Middle East. H. J. de Blij, P. O. Muller, and John Wiley & Sons.

