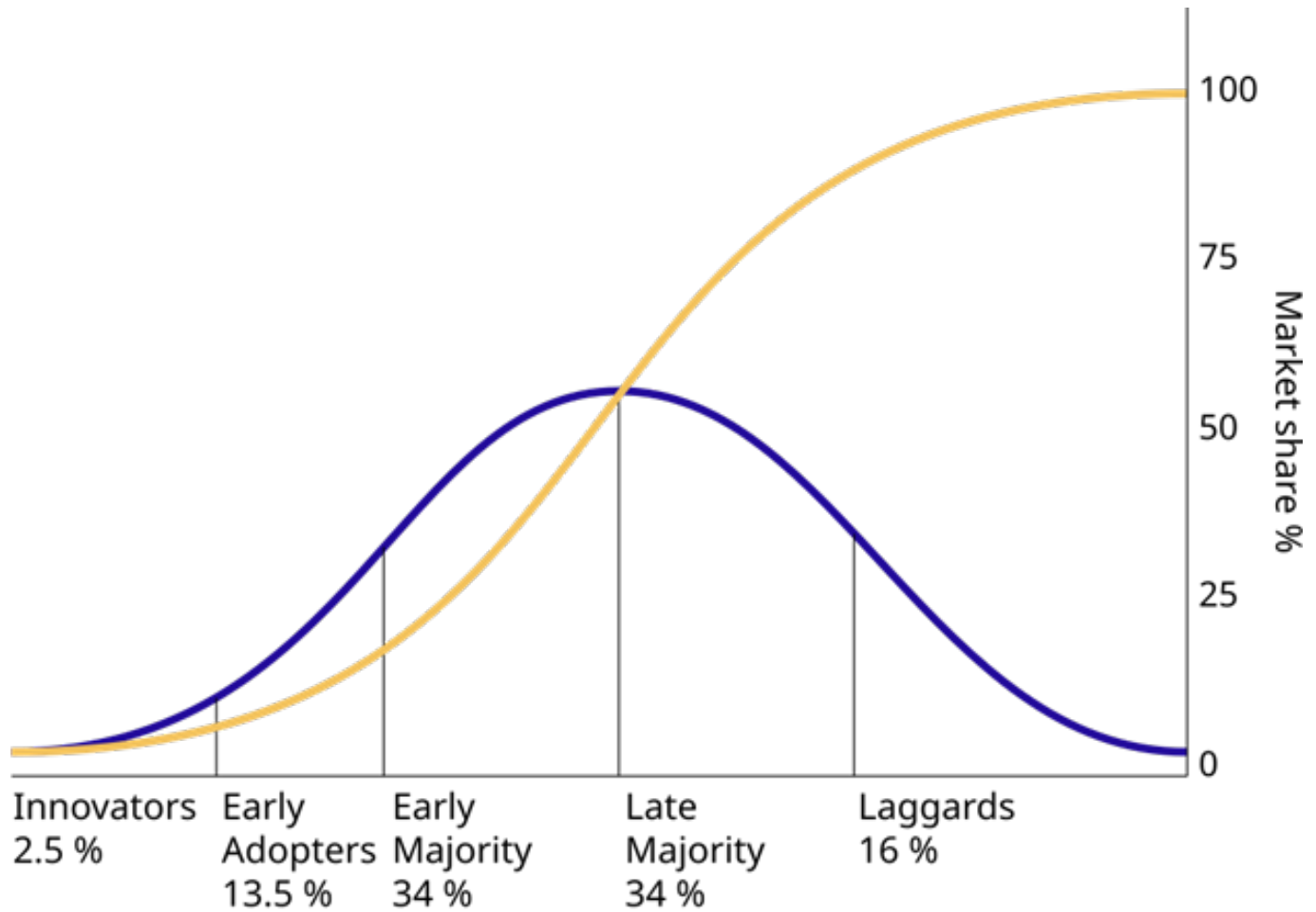


rocks,” a fad that resulted in actual products, showed a rapid S-curve rise driven by word-of-mouth followed by a quick decline once the market was saturated. Geographers use models such as the S Curve and the various types of diffusion to better understand how culture moves through spaces and influences the locations it reaches.

FIGURE 24



The yellow line in this graph shows the diffusion S curve, as the adoption of new cultural features shows a delayed start, rapid expansion, and then leveling off, reaching saturation.²³⁷

HISTORICAL CAUSES OF DIFFUSION

Historical occurrences such as colonization, trade, and war influence international migration and cultural blending. These processes caused cultural characteristics like language, religion, and customs to spread, change, or disappear over time. Today’s cultural landscape still reflects many of the historical processes that shaped it over the course of thousands of years.

Nations can cause historical diffusion when they exert forceful cultural influence through wars, economic policies, and political expansion efforts. **Colonialism** is the policy or practice of acquiring political control over another nation, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting its economy.²³⁸ Brutal violence often accompanied colonial practices, forcing elements of culture such as language, religion, and customs on native populations. The British Empire’s invasion and control of India and the **Scramble for Africa**, the rapid invasion and partition of nearly the entire African continent by European powers, reflect historical causes of cultural diffusion (Figure 25).²³⁹