

Human Geography

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Human Geography

Chapter 6. Religion

Chapter 6. Religion The Geography of Religion

- Origins and Distributions of the Major Religions
- Key Terms
- Religious Ecology
- Secularism, Fundamentalism, and Conflict

Chapter 6. Religion The Geography of Religion

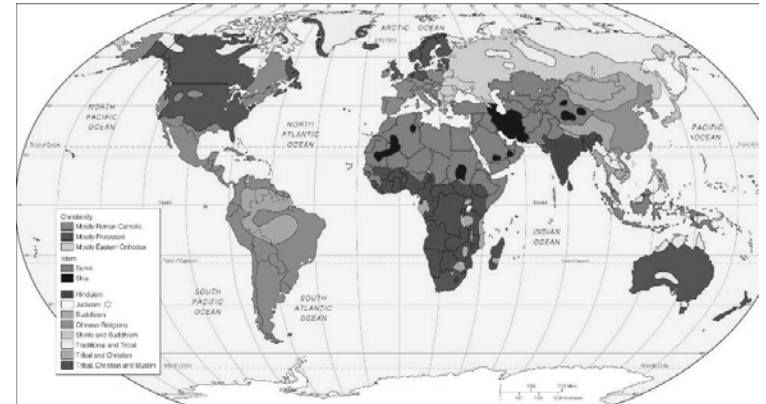
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Chapter 6. Religion The Geography of Religion



- Ethnic Religions versus Universalizing Religions (proselytic)
- Polytheism versus Monotheism

Chapter 6. Religion The Roots of Religion

- Animism (Shamanism) - the belief that all objects, animals, and beings are "animated" or possess a spirit and a conscious life. Also called shamanism because of the prominence of a Shaman.
- Such beliefs are common among hunter-gatherers.
- 10% of Africans follow such traditional ethnic religions.
- These beliefs are losing ground to Christianity and Islam throughout Africa.



Nigerian Shaman



Chapter 6. Religion How do Universalizing and Ethnic Religions Differ?

Universalizing	Ethnic
•Appeal to people everywhere	•Has meaning in particular place only.
•Individual founder (prophet)	•Unknown source.
•Message diffused widely (missionaries)	•Content focused on place and landscape of origin.
•Followers distributed widely.	•Followers highly clustered.
•Holidays based on events in founder's life.	•Holidays based on local climate and agricultural practice.

Chapter 6. Religion

Native American Animism

- Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.
~ Chief Seattle



Bear Dance

Chapter 6. Religion

Hinduism

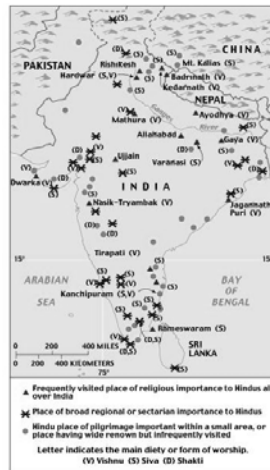
- 900 million + adherents, primarily in India (4th largest)
- Hinduism is an ancient term for the complex and diverse set of religious beliefs practiced around the Indus River.



Chapter 6. Religion

Hinduism

- The four sacred texts are ancient hymns called the *Vedas*, but few Hindus historically could read.
- Coastlines and river banks most sacred sites.
- Many, many festivals, often surrounding harvest or spring or the birth of Gods.
- Brahman is the divine creator but is manifested in literally hundreds of gods, of which Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu are most common.



Chapter 6. Religion

Hinduism

Ganges River, Varanasi, India



Chapter 6. Religion Hinduism - Brahman

In the Hindu religion, **Brahman** is the eternal, unchanging, infinite, immanent, and transcendent reality which is the Divine Ground of all matter, energy, time, space, and being.

The first principle of Indian thought, therefore, is that the ultimate reality is beyond description. It is something that can be experienced only by bringing the mind to a stop; and once experienced, it cannot be described to anyone in terms of the forms of this world.
- Joseph Campbell

Another important concept is that Hinduism believes in the omnipresence of the Supreme God in every individual. There is no "fall." Man is not cut off from the divine. He requires only to bring the spontaneous activity of his mind to a state of stillness and he will experience that divine principle within him.
- Joseph Campbell

Chapter 6. Religion Hindu Beliefs and Practices

- **Reincarnation** – the soul is immortal but the body endlessly cycles to higher or lower levels of existence.
- **Yoga** – the practices or tools used to break from habits of past lives. Includes various meditations and physical practices.

The Purusharthas or The Four Aims of Human Life:

1. Dharma (righteousness)
2. Artha (wealth)
3. Kama (desire)
4. Moksha (salvation or liberation) – release from the endless cycles.

Chapter 6. Religion The Trinity of Brahman

Brahma (The Creator)

- depicted with four faces each continually reciting one of the Vedas. The force of creation and birth.

Shiva (The Destroyer)

- Shakti or power; the dissolving force in life; centrifugal force; entropy.

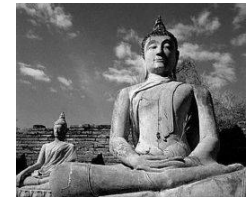
Vishnu (The Preserver)

- peace; balance; Sustainer of life.



Chapter 6. Religion Buddhism

- 300 million + adherents primarily in China and S.E. Asia
- Originated near modern Nepal around 530 BC by prince Siddhartha Guatama.
- Spread originally in India and Sri Lanka by Magadhan Empire (250 BC).
- Indian traders brought it to China in 1st century AD.
- By 6th century it had lost its hold on India, but was now in Korea and Japan.



Chapter 6. Religion Buddhism

Four Noble Truths:

1. All living beings must endure suffering.
2. Suffering, which is caused by desires (for life), leads to reincarnation.
3. The goal of existence is an escape from suffering and the endless cycle of reincarnation by means of Nirvana.
4. Nirvana is achieved by the Eightfold Path, which includes rightness of understanding, mindfulness, speech, action, livelihood, effort, thought, and concentration.



Karma - your past bad or good actions determine your progress toward Nirvana through reincarnation. You are your own God.

Theravada - the older, more severe form which requires the renouncing of all worldly goods and desires.

Mahayana - focuses on Buddha's teachings and compassion.

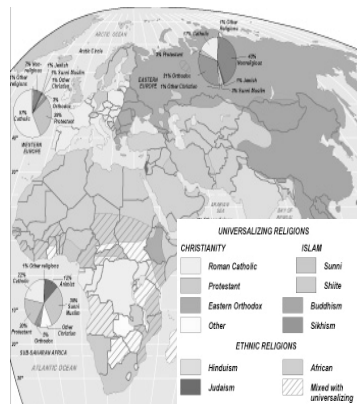
Chapter 6. Religion Judaism

- 14 million adherents
- Monotheistic
- Pentateuch
 - First five books of the Old Testament
- Sects
 - Orthodox, Conservative, Reform
- Israel
 - Homeland for Jewish people
 - Created 1948
 - Conflict between Israel and Palestine

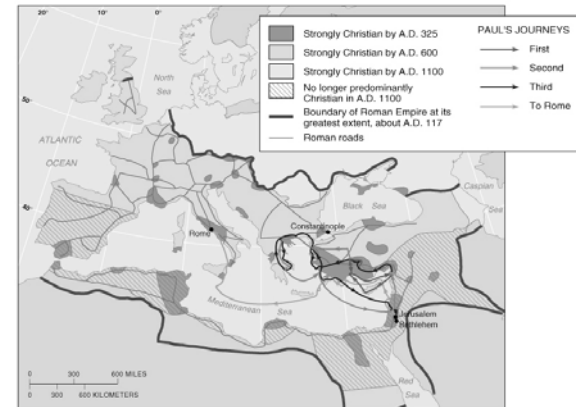


Chapter 6. Religion Christianity

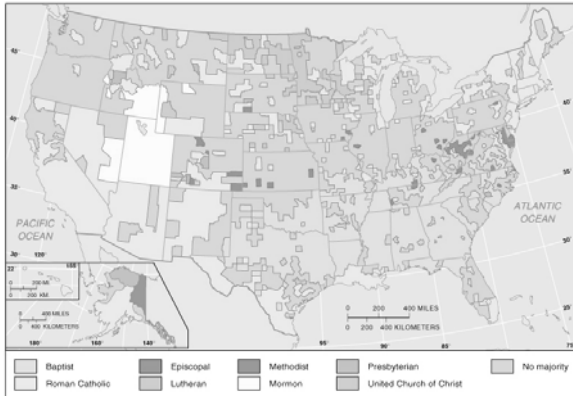
- 2 billion adherents make it most practiced in the world.
- Originated in Bethlehem (8-4 BC) and Jerusalem (AD 30) with Jesus Christ.
- Spread by missionaries and the Roman Empire (Constantine A.D. 313).
- It is the most practiced religion in Africa today.



Chapter 6. Religion Diffusion of Christianity

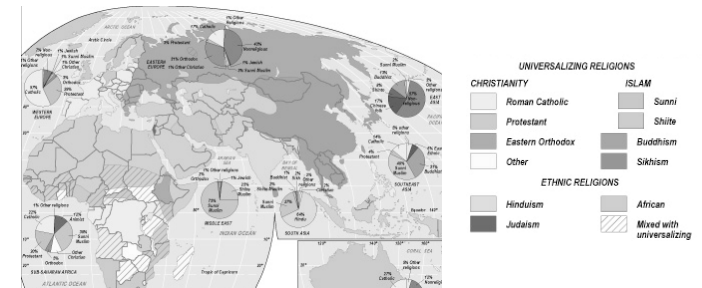


Chapter 6. Religion Christianity in the United States



Chapter 6. Religion Islam

- 1 billion + adherents
- Originated in Saudi Arabia (Mecca and Medina) around AD 600.
- Spread originally by Muslim armies to N. Africa, and the Near East.
- Sunni (83%) - throughout the Muslim world.
- Shiite - Iran (40%), Pakistan (15%), Iraq (10%)



Prophet: Muhammad
Holy Text: Koran

Five Pillars of Islam

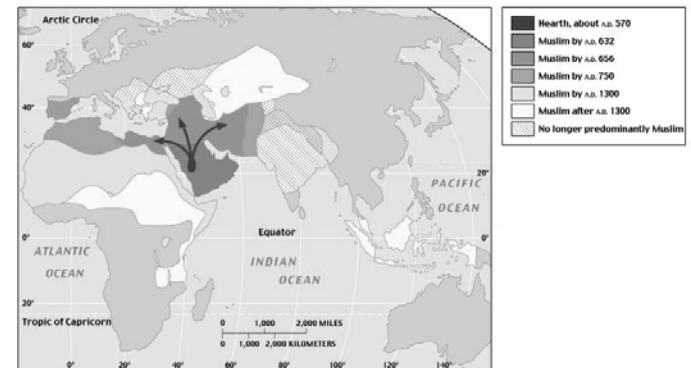
- There is one God and Muhammad is his messenger.
- Prayer five times daily, facing Mecca.
- The giving of alms (charity) to the poor.
- Fasting during Ramadan for purification and submission.
- If body and income allow, a Muslim must make a pilgrimage (hajj) to Mecca in his lifetime.

Islamic Calendar

- Begins in AD 622 when Muhammad was commanded to Mecca from Medina (Hijra).
- Lunar calendar makes Ramadan move through the seasons (30 year cycle - 19 years with 354 days and 11 with 355).

Reading the Koran, Brunei

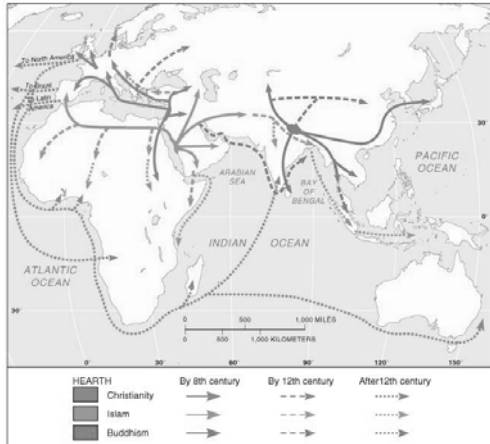
Chapter 6. Religion Diffusion of Islam



Islam is considered the fastest growing religion in America. Only a small part of this growth is from black Muslims and the *Nation of Islam*.

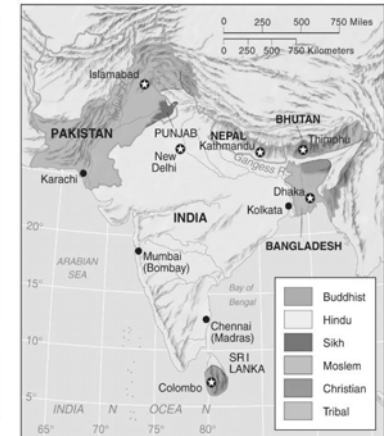
Chapter 6. Religion

The Diffusion of Islam



Chapter 6. Religion

The Geography of Religion



Chapter 6. Religion

Religion and Politics

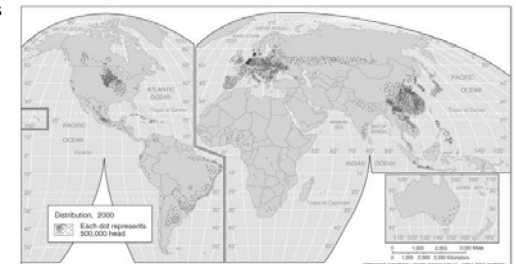
- **Freedom of religion;** Separation of church and state
 - Long, but messy and contested, history of separation of church and state in Christian West. Immigration today is challenging Western notions about secular society.
 - Many Islamic nations today are officially Islamic, though secular and are essentially modified theocracies. In secular Islamic countries such as Turkey, fundamentalist parties seek to win elections.
- **Theocracy**
 - Church rules directly; today in Iran and Saudi Arabia, for example.

Chapter 6. Religion

The Social Impact of Religion

- Gender roles
 - Women's rights
- Diet
 - Vegetarians
 - Pork, beef
 - Alcohol
- Ethics and morals
- Schools and institutions

World Distribution of Hogs



Chapter 6. Religion

The Economic Impact of Religion

- **Banking and lending**
 - Biblical prohibition against *usury* (lending at interest). Still followed in Muslim world (only fees are charged).
- **Protestantism and capitalism**
 - Max Weber and the Protestant Ethic; argues that individualism of Protestantism leads to acquisitiveness.
- **Catholic Church and capitalism**
 - Pope John Paul II praised free markets but with the caution that they cannot meet all needs and salaries must be "just."
- **Confucianism versus individualism**
 - Confucius elevated the status of noble bureaucrats and commitment to societal good. This allows Asian nations to attract top talent to government jobs. Also, diligence with regard to savings and spending may be a consequence of Confucian ideas.

Chapter 6. Religion

Religion and Environment

- **Burial practices**
 - Judeo-Christians bury.
 - Hindus and Buddhists cremate.
- **Relationship with nature**
 - Sacred Spaces
 - Sacred architecture
 - Role of religion in domination of earth?



Chapter 6. Religion

Key Terms

- **Syncretism** - the mixing of two or more religions that creates unique rituals, artwork, and beliefs.
- Examples include syncretism of Christianity and indigenous beliefs in the Americas, Africa, and Asia.
- Caribbean Voodoo (Haiti, Louisiana)
- Christianity in Indigenous Latin American



Chapter 6. Religion

Key Terms

Secularization - a process that is leading to increasingly large groups of people who claim no allegiance to any church.

- Some of these people are atheists. Others simply do not practice. Still others call themselves spiritual, but not religious.
- Common in Europe and the cities of the U.S.
- Common in former Soviet Union and China.

Fundamentalism - a process that is leading to increasingly large groups of people who claim there is only one way to interpret worship.

- Fundamentalists generally envision a return to a more perfect religion and ethics they imagine existed in the past.
- Common in the U.S. and in some Islamic nations.

Chapter 6. Religion **Religious Conflicts**

- **The Big Question:** Can secular society exist alongside traditional and fundamentalist religious sects and states?
- We are quick to notice fundamentalism abroad (i.e. Salman Rushdie's death sentence by Shia clerics) and not so quick to recognize it at home (abortion clinic bombings; Southern Baptist Convention's calls for women to submit to their husbands' authority).
- American evangelical Christianity and Islamic fundamentalism are the two most influential fundamentalist movements in the world.
- Fewer and fewer states are governed by an official church.