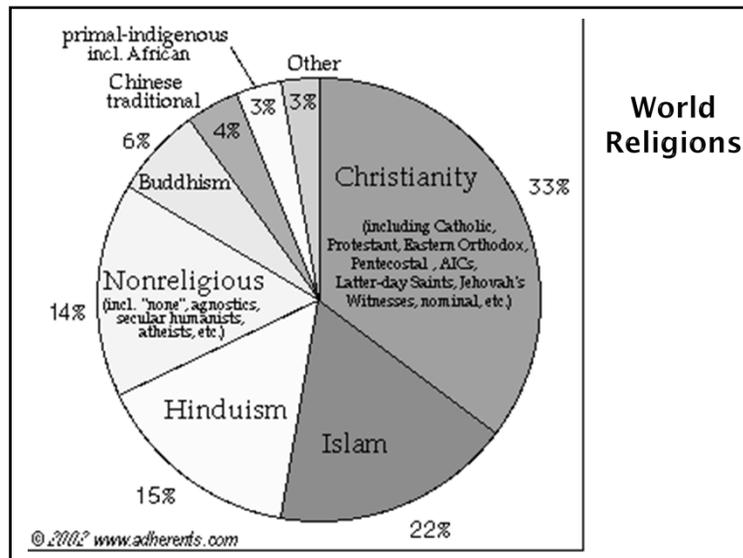


RELIGION

Brief Outlines
 Pamela Oliver
 Sociology 220

Some preliminaries

- Intertwining of culture and religion.
 - Holidays, calendars, daily practices, food
 - Culture as culture can be very oppressive
- Wars are often along ethnic/national lines that tend to coincide with religion, but less clear that it is "for religion."
 - Histories of Muslim & Christian conquests and "religious wars"
 - Lots of ethnic conflict along religious lines
 - Many wars among people of "the same" religion, e.g. between European countries, Iran vs Iraq, Northern Ireland (Protestant vs. Catholic)
- Power politics: if your group is oppressed by another religion, the religion tends to become a bastion of resistance.
- It matters whether religion is part of the state/power structure or outside it. Religion is often a base for opposition to power.
- Religious people will bring their beliefs into any social movement they get involved with, but not clear that the beliefs "cause" the movement
 - Most Southern Blacks and Whites had/have basically the same evangelical Protestant religion but were/are on opposite sides of the Civil Rights Movement and today's political divides



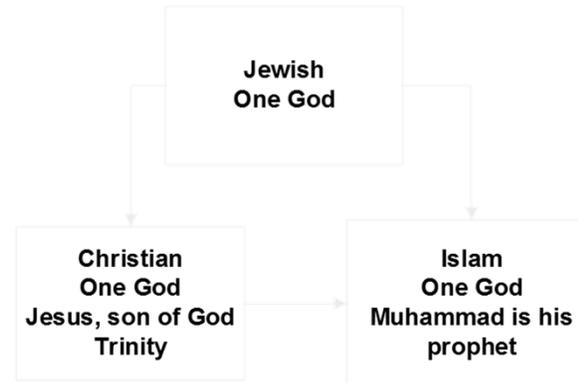
	Percents
Christian	~75-85%
Protestant (~50%)	
Catholic (~25%)	
Secular/ No religion	~10-15%
Jewish	~1%
Muslim	~0.5-1%
Buddhist	~0.5%
Hindu	~.5%
Other religions	~1-1.5%

Religious Affiliation in the US

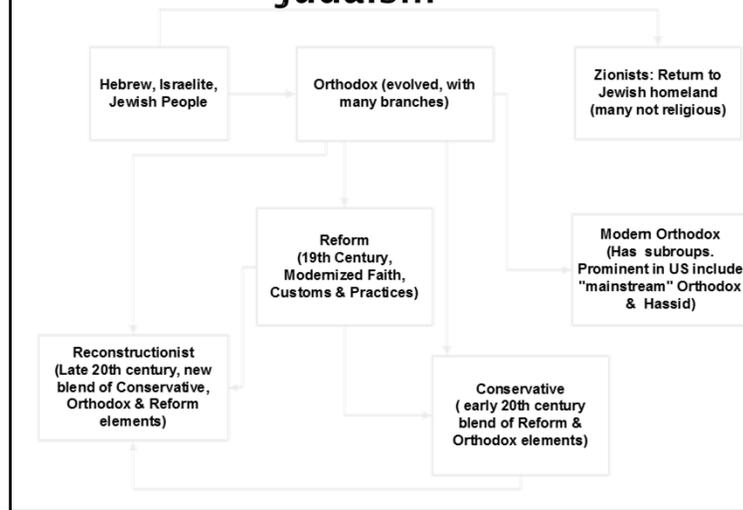
Atheism/ No religion

- ❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_atheism
- ❑ Atheist = "there is no God" [Some say this requires a concept of God, otherwise you cannot reject it.]
- ❑ A significant fraction of people who claim any religion (including Christian) also say they are atheists. A significant fraction of people who claim "no religion" say they believe in God.
 - Self-proclaimed "no religion" in US rose after 1990, appears to be tied to rise in religious right in politics
 - Self-proclaimed atheism in Europe rose after WWII. Religious a small minority
- ❑ Agnostic = "I don't know whether there is God" [both religious and non-religious people may claim to be agnostic]
- ❑ Debate about whether a belief system must have an idea of God in it to be called a religion. E.g. Buddhism, Confucianism, Unitarian secular humanism.

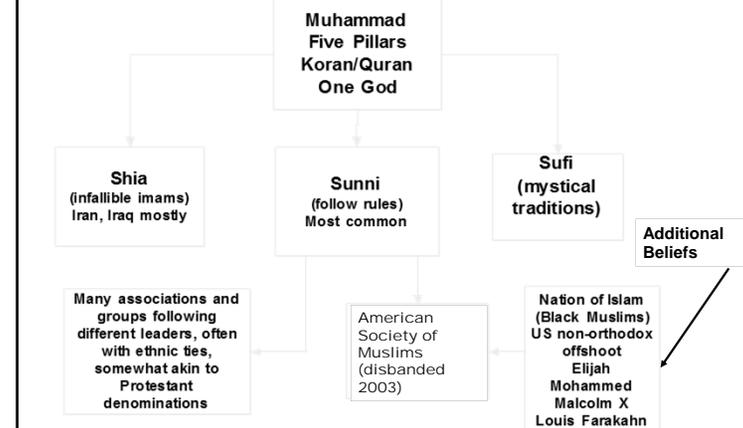
Monotheist Faiths originating in the Middle East

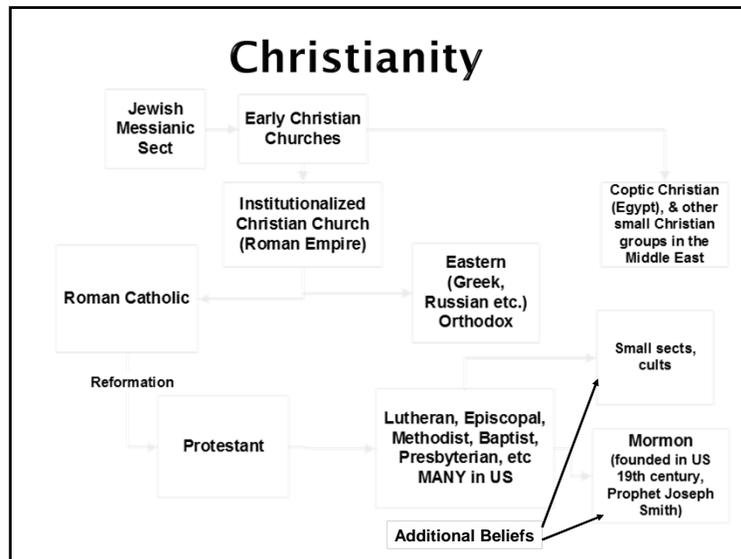


Judaism



Islam (Emphasis on US groups)





- ## US Christianity 1
- ❑ Often has an “ethnic” component, immigrants tended to form ethnic churches
 - ❑ US Protestantism involves MANY different denominations. Large ones include Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists. Each of these has splinters that often disagree.
 - ❑ Black denominations are most often separate from White denominations due to history of segregation.
 - ❑ All races may be Catholic although strong ethnic churches among Latinos, Polish, German, Irish, Italian.

- ## US Christianity -2-
- ❑ A major distinction in US Christianity – especially White Protestantism -- is roughly liberal/conservative.
 - “Liberal” or “Mainline” Protestant denominations are members of the National Council of Churches (and World Council of Churches).
 - Conservative denominations are more loosely structured. Include evangelicals. National Council of Evangelicals.
 - ❑ Catholic church & Black denominations tend to be aligned with liberals on economic issues & conservatives on sexual/social issues.

- ## South Asian Religions
- ❑ Hinduism: modern name of the ancient religion(s) of the people of India
 - ❑ Buddhism: teachings of the Buddha, offshoot of the ancient Indian religion
 - ❑ Sikhism: an attempt to merge/reconcile Hinduism & Islam, now an ethnic/religious minority in India (Sikh men wear turbans, never cut their hair)
 - ❑ Islam is dominant in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Kashmir region of India, Afghanistan

Hinduism

- ❑ Modern version of a complex set of beliefs and practices of the people of India
- ❑ No single point of origin. Sacred texts date back to at least 1500 BCE.
- ❑ Many different “gods” are worshiped, but usually understood as representations of one divinity: there are many different ideas about how to understand this
- ❑ Historically very tolerant of other religions, appreciated religious diversity within Hinduism
- ❑ Modern Hindu fundamentalist movements are not tolerant

Buddhism 1

- ❑ Teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (AKA Shakyamuni and the Buddha - enlightened one) ~ 530 BCE
- ❑ Outgrowth, reaction to the ancient Indian religious teachings
- ❑ “Officially” there is no deity; for some subgroups there are worship-type practices & beliefs; images of the Buddha are common and treated similarly to images of God/s in other religions

Buddhism 2

- ❑ Two main branches with differences in rituals, practices & beliefs
 - Theravada (Southern) Buddhism, dominant in most of Southeast Asia (Thailand, Burma, Cambodia and Laos). Closer to Indian traditions, “orthodox” Buddhism. The world is not substantial.
 - Mahayana (Northern) Buddhism is largely found in China, Japan, Korea, Tibet and Mongolia. (Tibetan somewhat separate, due to isolation). Influenced by Chinese traditions; more “schools” with distinct teachings. Look inward for enlightenment.
- ❑ Modern Buddhism often merges elements from both traditions

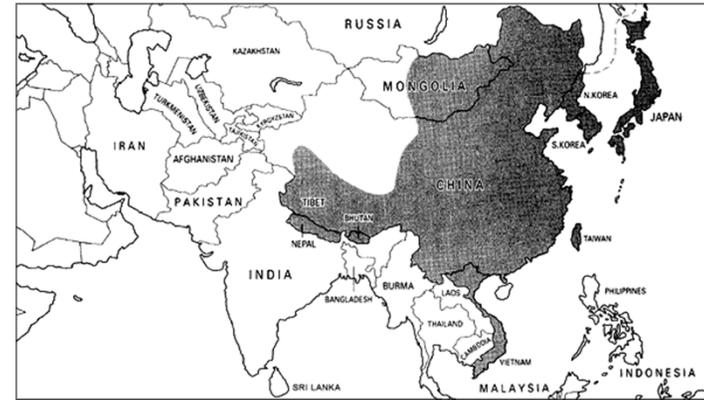
Spread of Buddhism



Theravada Buddhism



Mahayana Buddhism



China

- ▣ Confucianism: a philosophy (no deity), dominant in China, a set of principles for a well-ordered life that still influences much Chinese thinking; “religious” rituals centered on ancestors
- ▣ Daoism and other traditional religious or spiritual practices
- ▣ Ancestor worship
- ▣ Buddhism
- ▣ Qigong movement (physical & meditative practices which are not necessarily religious)
 - Falun gong: one group viewed as a dangerous cult by government
- ▣ Communism: officially no religion.

Korea

- ▣ Buddhism
- ▣ Christianity (mostly Presbyterian & Catholic)
- ▣ Traditional Korean practices around ancestors
- ▣ Many are secular (nonreligious)
- ▣ Celebrate both Buddhist & Christian holidays

Japan

- ▣ Buddhism +Shinto (can be both).
- ▣ Shinto: traditional religion of Japan, centered on ancestors
- ▣ Many are secular but enjoy holidays, including Christmas (understood as secular fun)

Religion & Ethnicity

- ▣ Religion & ethnicity intertwine in practice: holidays, customs, rituals, morality
- ▣ Controversial issues to consider:
 - France & Turkey ban “religious symbols” including Muslim head scarves at school
 - Which holiday customs are appropriate in the public sphere
 - How do we respect each other in a multi-cultural and multi-religious space?
 - How can one person publicly “be” who they are without offending others?
 - Whose holidays get respect?