



Geography 107

Geography of
Religion
Lecture Outline

Geography



Introduction

- Religion can be defined as a set of beliefs and practices through which people seek mental and physical harmony with the powers of the universe, through which they attempt to influence and accommodate the awesome forces of nature, life and death
- Or...

Put more simply

- Religion is a means by which many people make sense of their world and cope with life's issues.
- Can be wonderful and can be a source of great conflict.



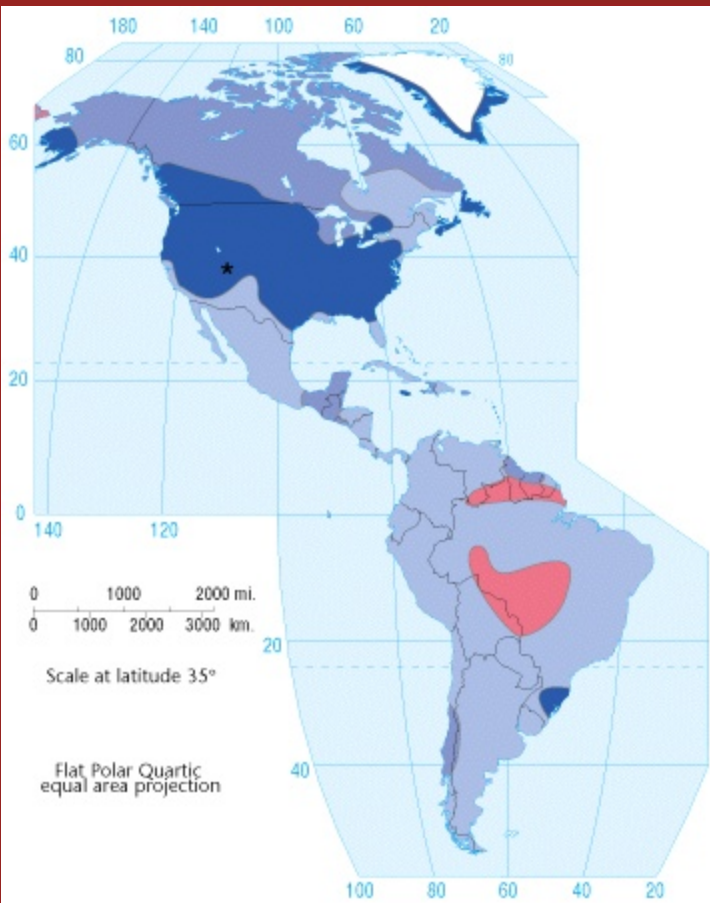
Geogra

Two Kinds of Religion

- Proselytic
 - go out and seek new members
 - generally want to convert the entire world
 - Christianity, Islam
- Ethnic
 - do not seek converts, must be born into these religions
 - many tribal religions, Hinduism, Judaism



World Religious Regions (fig)



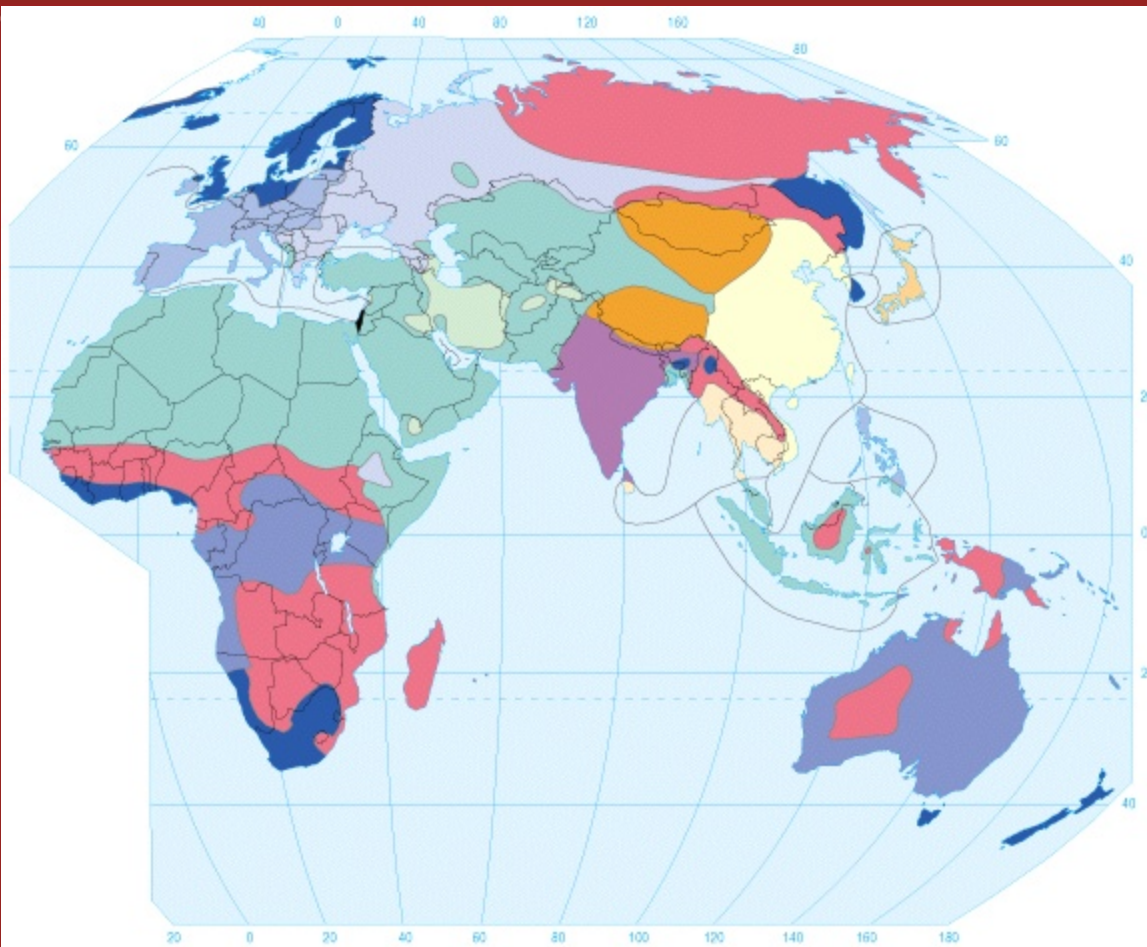
Christianity

- Mixed
- Catholic
- Protestant
- Eastern

★ Protestant-derived

Islam

- Sunni
- Shiah

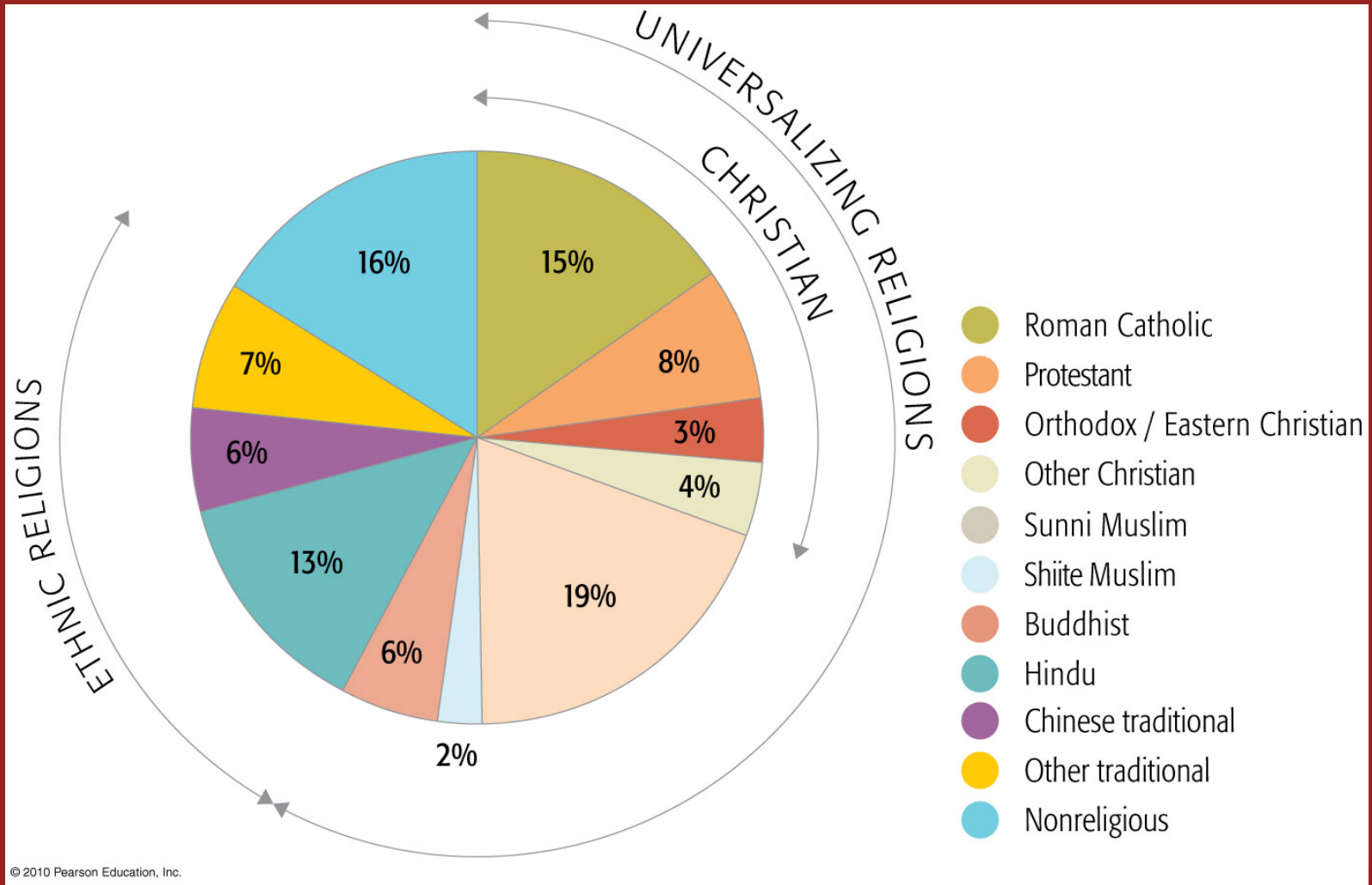


Buddhism

- Theravada
- Chinese Mahayana
- Japanese Mahayana
- Tantrayana

- Hinduism
- Judaism
- Animism

World Religions – Pie Chart



Christianity



-World's largest faith in area and adherents

Eastern Christians

-Includes Greek and Eastern Orthodox

Western Christians

-Catholics

-Protestants

Other Christians

-Coptics, Maronites, Nestorians

-The Armenian Church



Geography

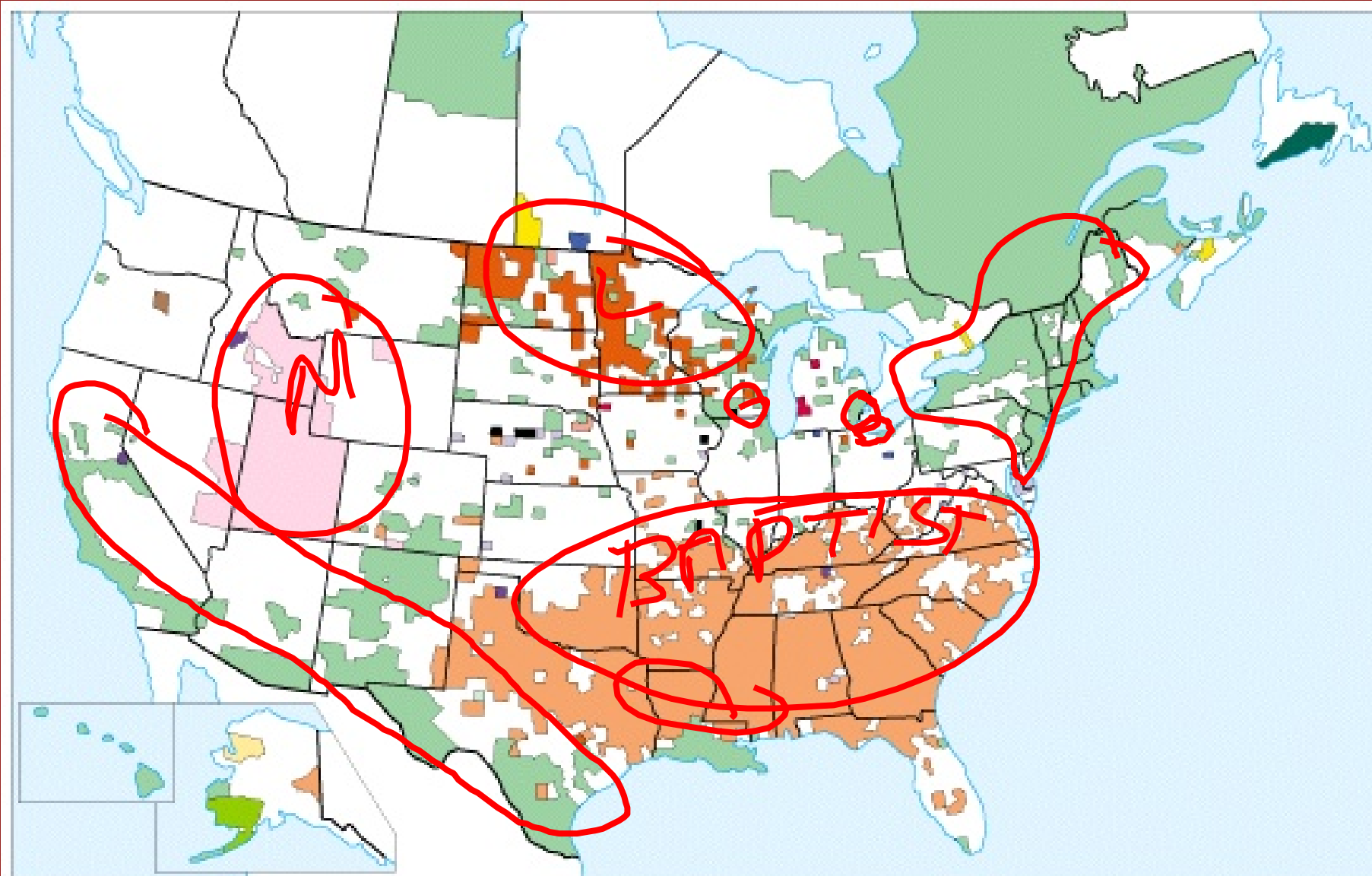
American Christianity

- Bible Belt Baptists
- Mormon West
- Catholic Borderlands
- Lutheran Upper Midwest
- Mixed Midwest



Geography

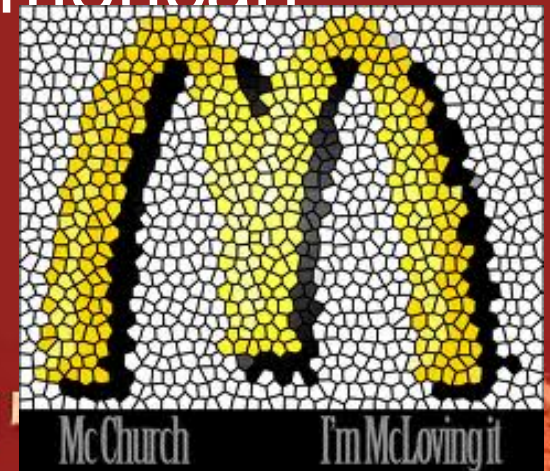




No denomination has majority	Catholic	Latter-Day Saints (Mormon)	Methodist	Reformed
Anglican/Episcopal	Christian (Church of Christ)	Lutheran	Moravian	United Church of Canada
Baptist	Friends (Quakers)	Mennonite	Pentecostal	United Church of Christ

Divergence or Convergence?

- The American West and religious proliferation. Why?
- Some suggest a homogenization of American religion.
- Roger Stump (book) suggests an increasing regionalization of American religion.



If you moved to Minnesota, your neighbors are likely to be:

- A. Baptists
- B. Catholics
- C. Lutherans
- D. Mormons
- *And...they'd be more like the other Minnesota Christians in terms of their beliefs than they would Hank Hill from Texas.*



Islam (fig)





Islam



Monotheistic

Mostly across Northern Africa, Southwest Asia and into Southeast Asia

Shares many commonalities with Judaism and Christianity

Muhammad is the main prophet

The Koran is the Holy Text of Islam

Geography



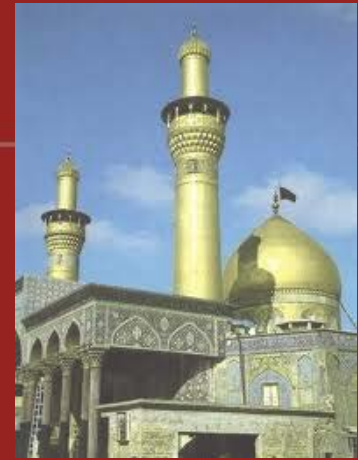
Five Pillars

1. Ramadan
2. Daily prayer (five times)
3. Pilgrimage to Mecca
4. Statement of Faith
5. Alms giving

Two Major Sects

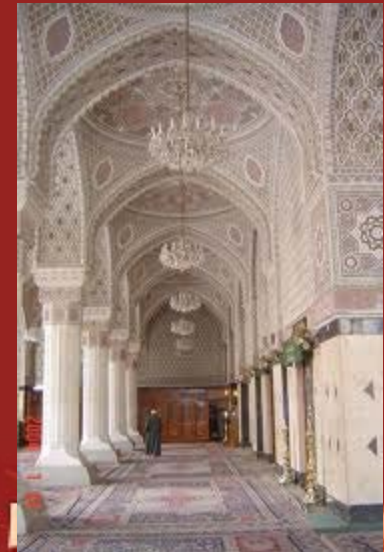
1. Shiite

- smaller in number of the two groups
- dominate in Iran and southern Iraq
- strong fundamentalist movement during the 1980s



2. Sunni

- Covers much of the Arabic speaking Muslim world
- Also includes Indonesia
- Orthodox

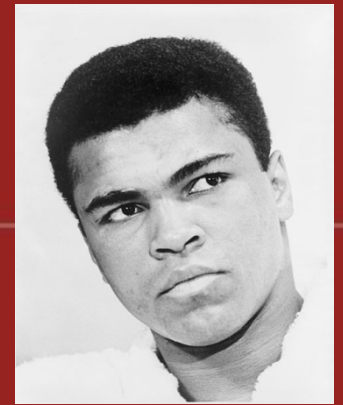


Mosque in Eastern Europe (fig)



US Muslims

- 1.5 to 7 million American Muslims
 - (hard to count obviously)
- Racially and ethnically diverse
 - American Black Muslims
 - Immigrants (new and old)
- Mostly urban



Judaism



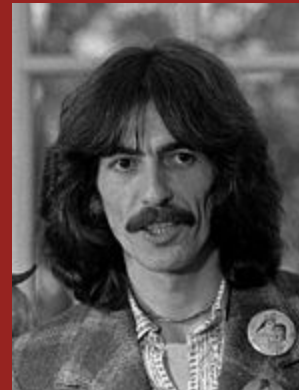
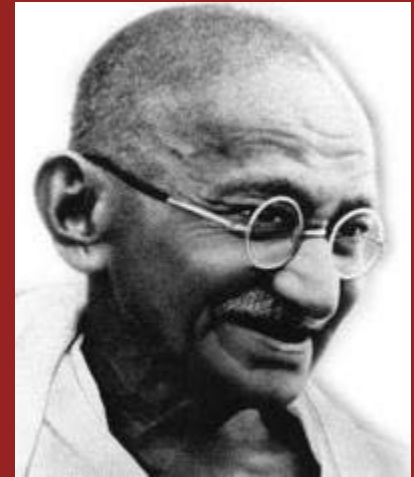
- Also monotheistic, parent faith of Christianity and Islam (?)
- Suffered a diaspora, therefore has many regional subgroups.
 - Sephardim in the Mediterranean lands
 - Ashkenazim in Europe (now US)
- 1/3 of Jews worldwide killed during holocaust
- 14 million Jews. Half in USA



Geograph

Hinduism

- Polytheistic and Ethnic (today)
- about 750 million adherents
- tied to the caste system
- believe in reincarnation
- many local forms



graph

Bathing in the Ganges (fig)



Hindu Temple in Malibu



Hindu Temple in Malibu





Sikhism



Sikhs -Adi Granth

- attempt at reconciling Islam and Hinduism
- in the Punjab and Southern California
- 19 million or so, 500,000 in the US.



graphy

GREAT

SWEDEN

Buddhism



- Broke away from Hinduism 2500 years ago
- founded by Prince Siddhartha (Buddha)
- Widespread in Asia
- Many composite faiths as conversion spread
- Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism
- Lamaism is popular in Tibet and Mongolia
- 500 million adherents?
- 2 to 6 million in the United States, behind perhaps only Christianity and Judaism?
- Mostly West Coast.



Los Angeles Temple

- *Wat Thai Of Los Angeles, originally known as "Theravada Buddhist Center", is the largest Thai Theravada Buddhist Temple in the United States.*

8225 Coldwater
Canyon Ave
North Hollywood



Monk at the feet of Buddha (fig)



Four Noble Truths

1. Life is full of suffering
 2. Desire is the cause of suffering
 3. Elimination of suffering requires the quelling of desire
 4. An eight-fold path can lead one to the quelling of desire
- *Nirvana* -a state of peace and calm reached by few is attained by those able to successfully navigate the path.

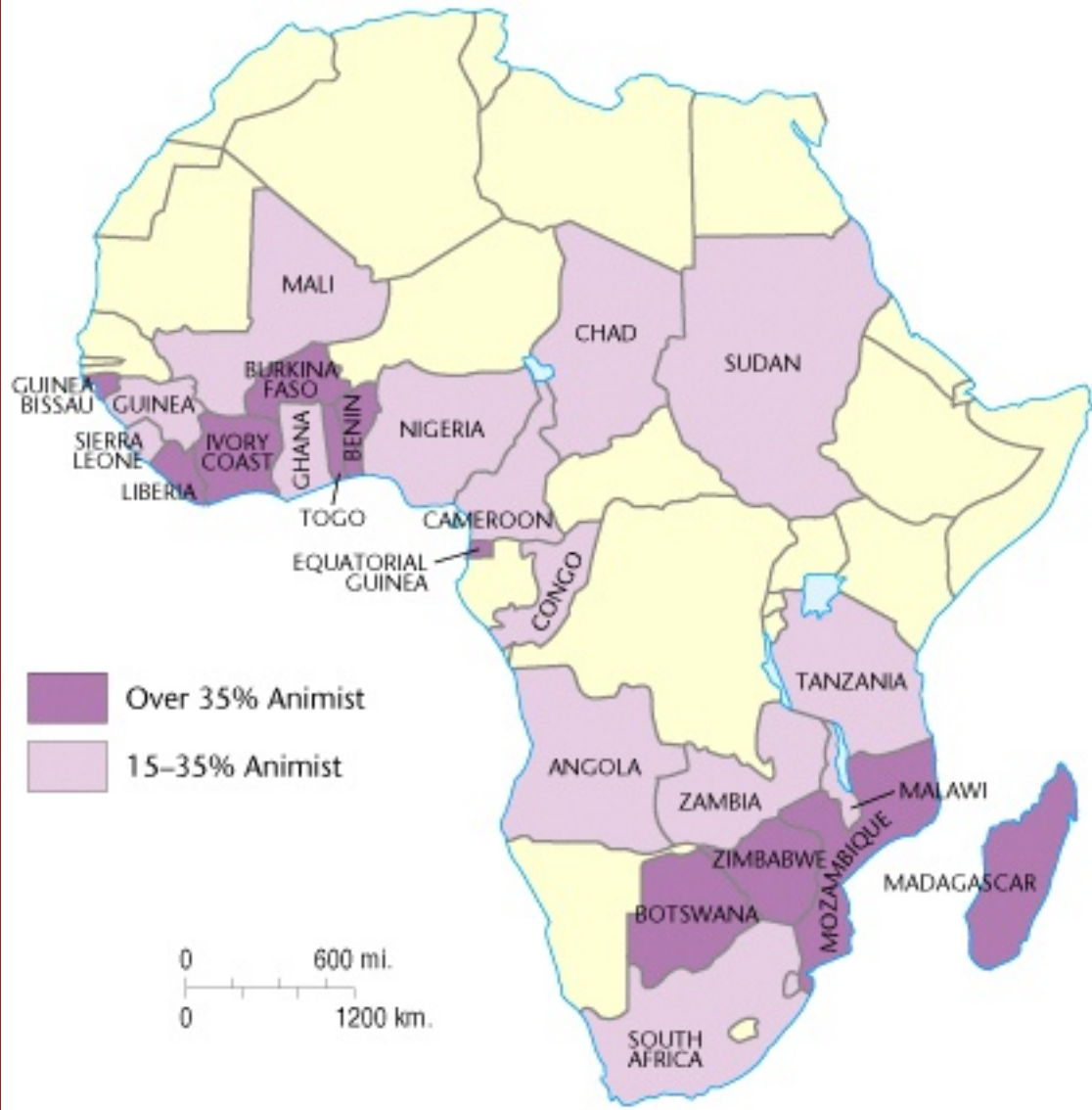


Animism



- Thousands of versions
- 100 million adherents
- Most popular in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Umbanda in Brazil, Santeria in Cuba
- Omnipresent God, often found in nature
- Don't underestimate the potential complexity and subtlety of animist faiths

Animism in Africa (fig)



Gris Gris





Ethnocentric Americans

- Frequently we fail to take seriously the religious beliefs of others, making them into caricatures of reality.
- This Totem Pole is part of a tacky-tourist attraction in Tennessee



Secularization



- A faith? 1 billion secularists worldwide
- Europeans are most secular (American are not even close)
- Why? _ Government and Modernization of cultures



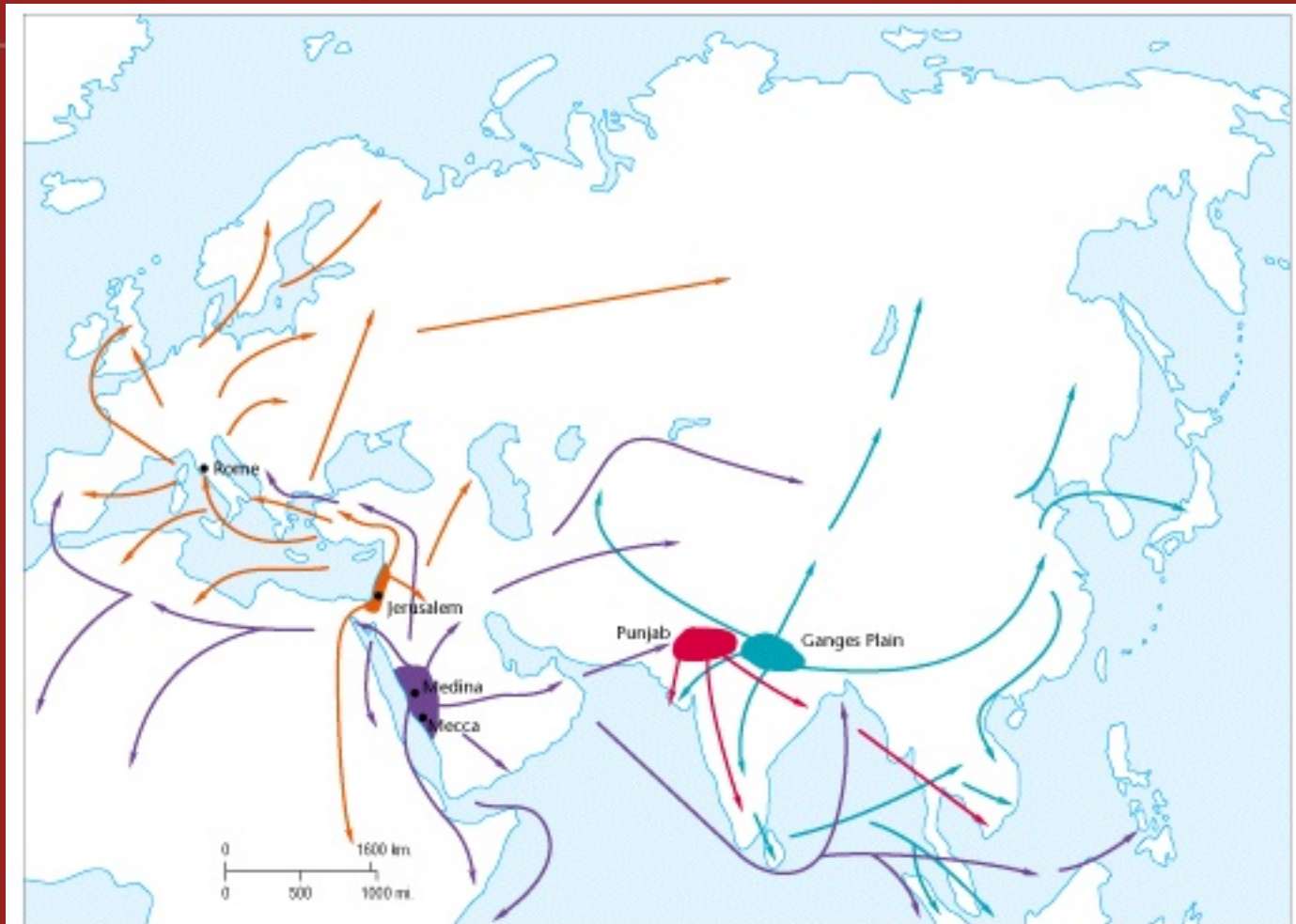
Christian or Secular?



Religious Diffusion

- Religions can spread by a variety of plans and actions
- How has much of the world's religious map been shaped?
- What is the primary manner in which Christianity spread into the US?
- What about other American religions?

Religious Diffusion (map)



Religious Ecology

- Religion, like other cultural elements help people cope with their environment.
- Environmental factors loom large in the basic nature of many religions.
- Different religions treat “mother nature” differently.



Ahisma (figure)

- Jains, Sikhs and Hindus



Nature and Religions

- Christmas Trees
- Earthquakes and God's wrath?
- Tornados and threat preparations.



Christmas



DECEMBER 25TH IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BIRTH OF MANY PAGAN GODS, INCLUDING MITHRA, HORUS, HERCULES, ZEUS, AND SOL INVICTUS. THE ROMAN FESTIVAL SATURNALIA WOULD ALSO END AROUND THIS TIME. CHRISTIANITY IMPORTED MANY OF THESE PAGAN MYTHS AND TRADITIONS INTO ITS OWN CUSTOMS AROUND 400 AD.

TODAY CHRISTIANS EXPRESS OUTRAGE THAT CHRISTMAS IS LOSING ITS CHRISTIAN ROOTS. THIS IS IRONIC SINCE IT WAS CHRISTIANITY THAT HIJACKED THE HOLIDAY IN THE FIRST PLACE TO MAKE IT EASIER TO CONVERT NEW FOLLOWERS.

NEVERTHELESS, IT IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE OUR LOVE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY, AND COMMIT ACTS OF GOODWILL FOR THOSE THAT ARE LESS FORTUNATE. IT IS A TIME FOR CHILDREN TO REVEL IN THEIR INNOCENCE AND WONDER ABOUT THE WORLD, AND ADULTS TO FIND THEIR INNER CHILD.



The Environment and Religion

- Is it coincidence that the World's major monotheistic faiths all were born in the desert?
- Few polytheistic nomads
- All early adherents were nomadic herders
- Simple- out in the open and the sky is dominant.



Cont.



- Social organization of nomads lends itself to patriarchal, hierarchy.
- most of the female deities are in farming societies
- most of the nomads lived on the edge of established farming cultures, and may have innovated in response to these groups.



Poll Results

-72 % of Spanish American Catholics feel people subject to nature

-55% of Mormons think humans are in harmony with nature

-48% of Texas Protestants think humans control nature and can overcome natural hazards

Link with politics? Perception of E.P.A.?



Cultural Integration in Religion

Religion affects a great number of other components of culture, including agriculture, economy, family sociology, politics, etc.

Geography



Religion and Economy

Food and beverage taboos are common

- viticulture, pork, alcohol, drugs, fish

Proscriptions for making loans

- Payday lending? Usury Law?

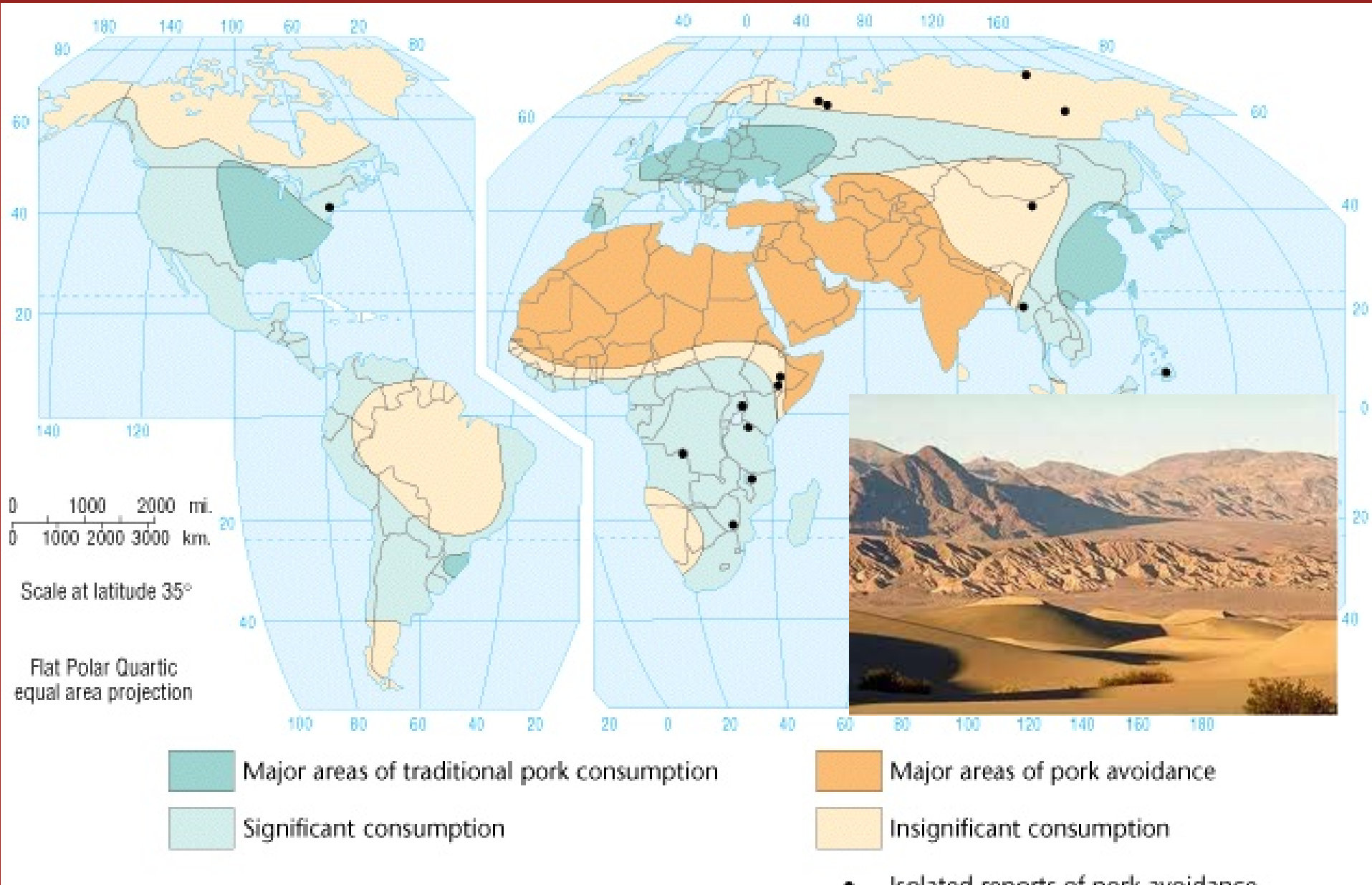
Gambling, Prostitution, etc.

Why the ban on pork among “Big 3”

- Trichinosis, pigs are dirty, nomadic sour grapes.

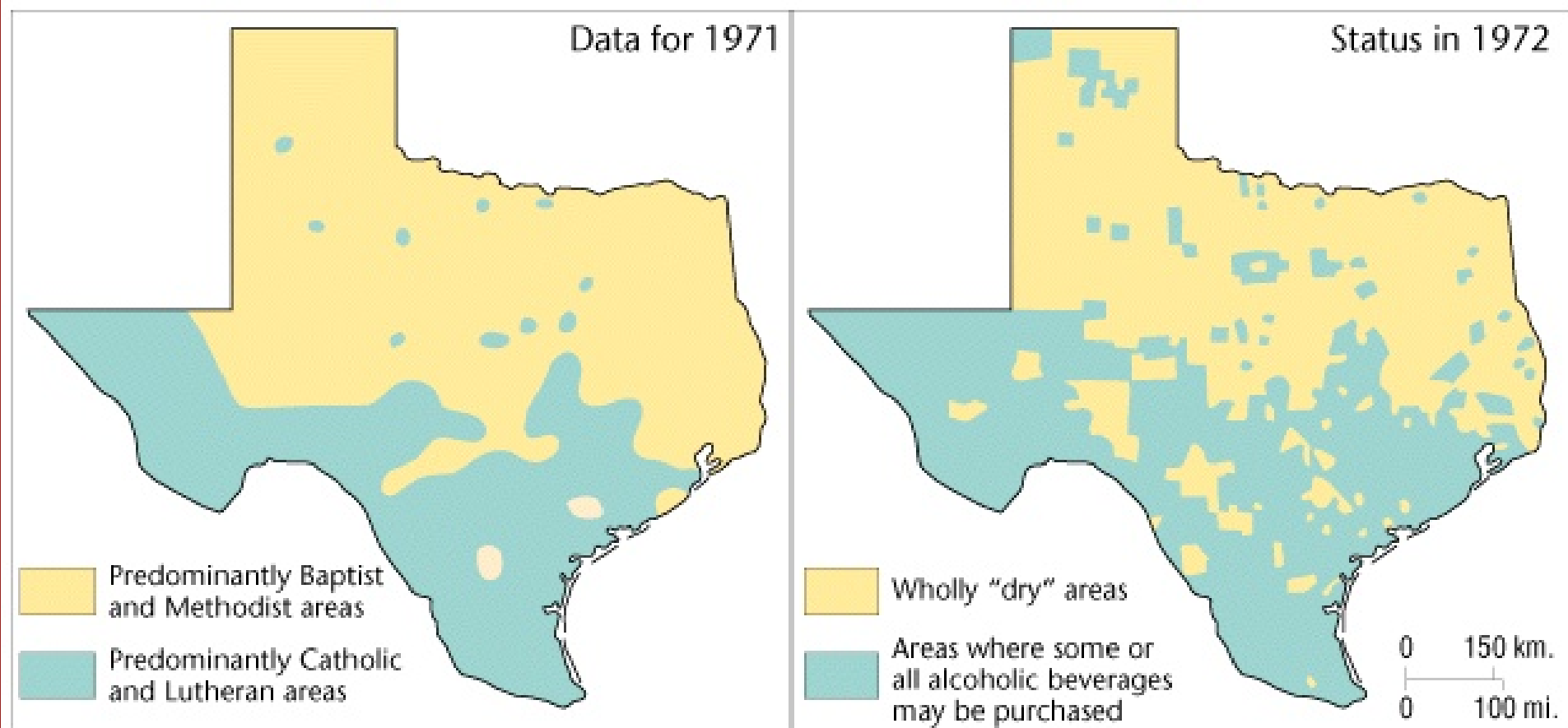


God and Pork



Texas and Beer (fig)

- Is beer evil?
- Ben Franklin's quote?
- What role has alcohol played in religions?



Religion and Political Geography

More common than one generally thinks

Nationalism-Religion intertwined

- India-Pakistan / Ireland
- Yugoslavia / Cyprus/ Chad

State Churches

Theocracy



In the United States

Religion informs many people's political beliefs

- Mormonism and Utah-
- Solid South
- Catholics (Massachusetts vs. New Mexico)
- Episcopalians

Sacred Spaces

Areas and sites that inspire sublime devotion, loyalty or fear

Pilgrimage sites, Churches, ritualized spaces, cemeteries can all be sacred.

Some are ancient, some are otherwise mundane

Any in the US?



Sacred Space?



Geography

Religious Landscapes

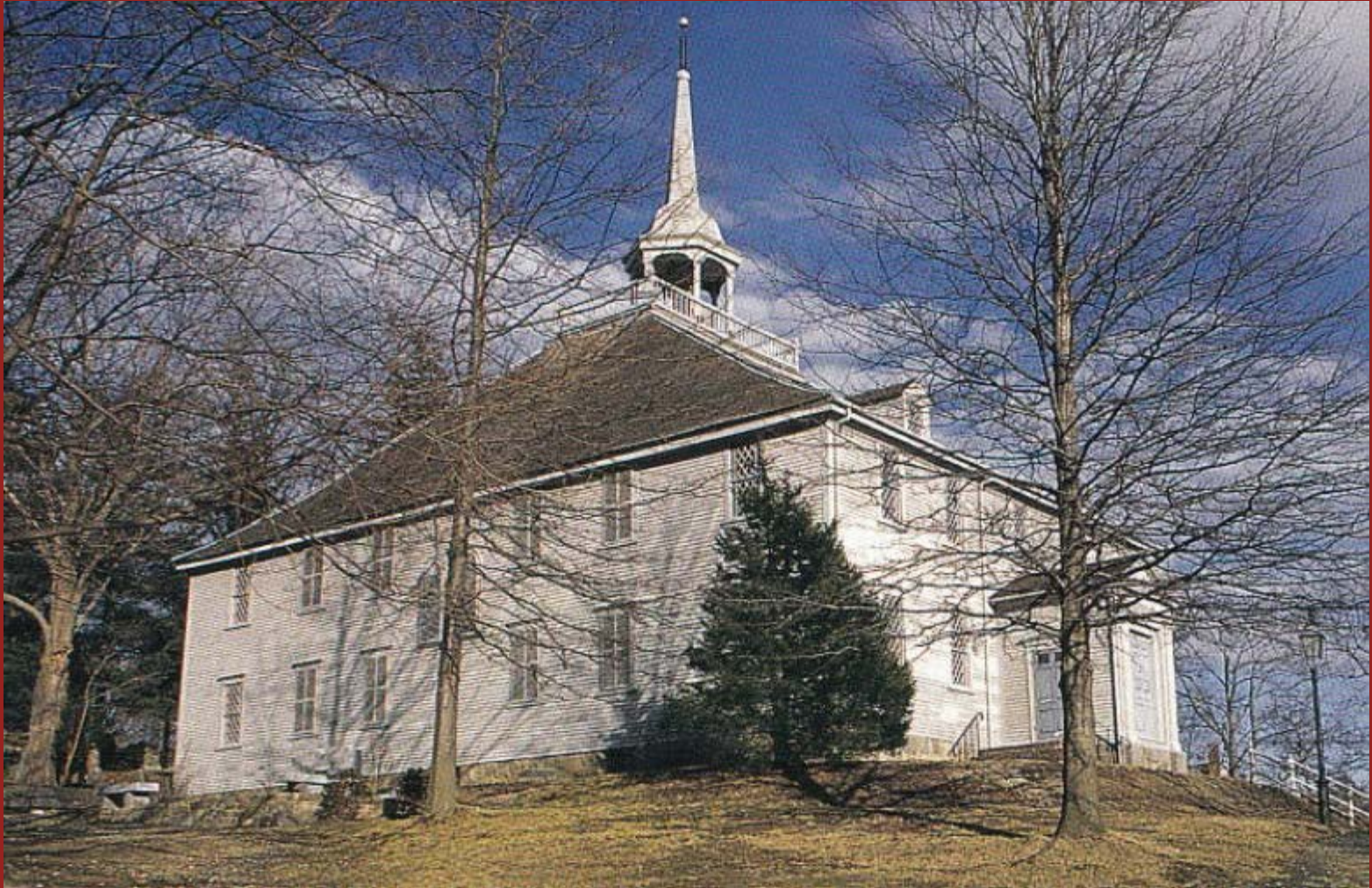
Religious Structures

- Roman Catholic
- Amish
- Bathtub Mary's



Geography

Square Puritan Church



Geography

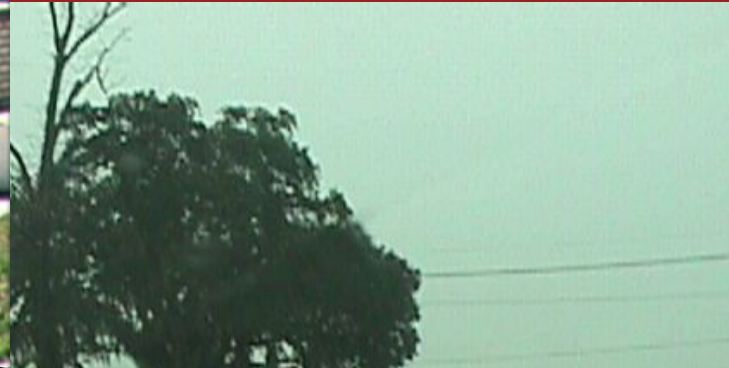
Cemeteries



Which group tends to build the most elaborate churches because they have more traditionally believed in their church as the “house of God”

- A. Baptists
- B. Catholics
- C. Mormons
- D. Presbyterians

Burying the Dead in South Louisiana

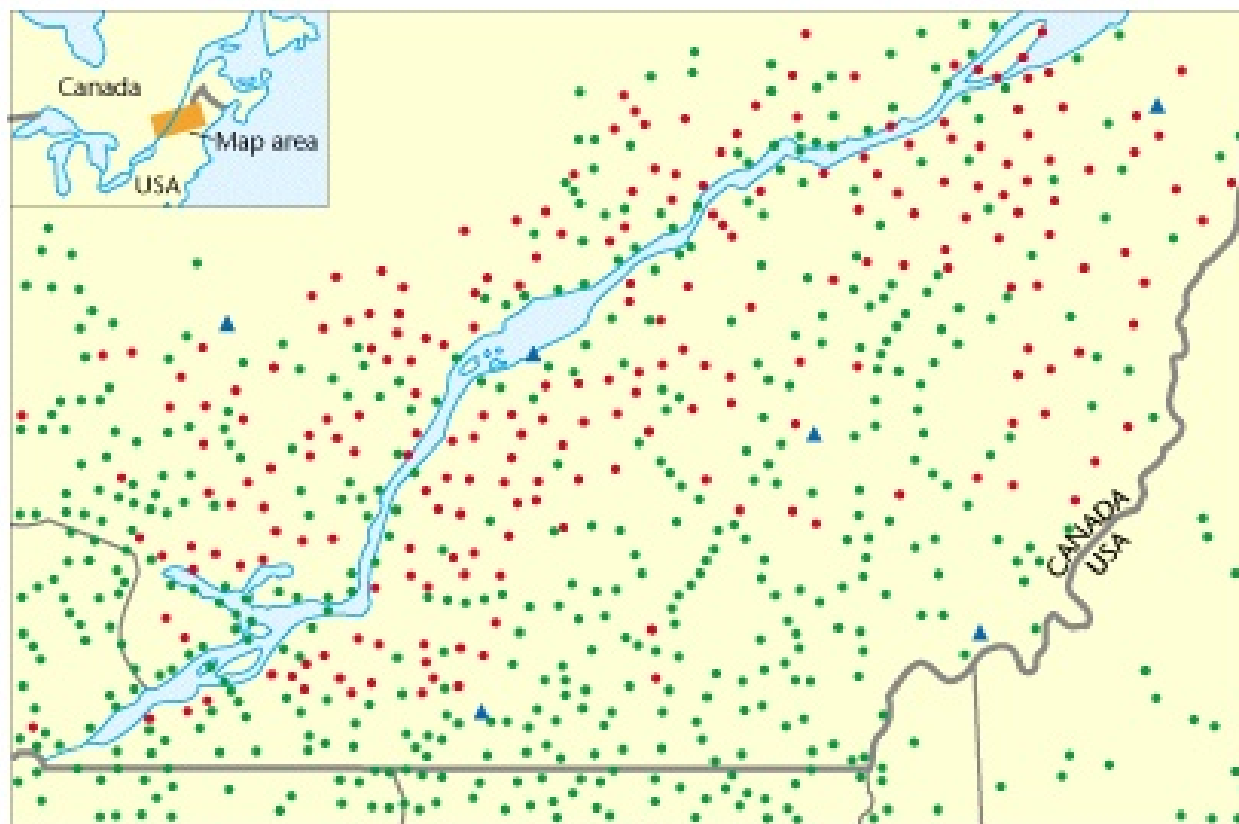


Religious Place Names

- Many towns, cities and landscape features bear witness to the religious beliefs of the people who named them.
- Can you think of any?



Religious Toponymy-Canada (map)



- ▲ Names beginning with Notre Dame
- Names beginning with Saint or Sainte
- Other names

Axis Mundi (fig)



Axis Mundi ? (fig)

